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THE
WORKS
OF
Dr. EDWARD YOUNG.

VOL. V.

THE



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Dr. Edward Young

Ed Bentall

THE

*July 3rd
1835.*

WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

Dr. EDWARD YOUNG.

IN

SIX VOLUMES.

Carefully Compared and Corrected by the Author's Edition.

VOLUME the FIFTH.

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DR. EDWARD YOUNG

SIX VOLUMES

Complete Course of Lectures on the Principles of Natural Philosophy

VOLUME THE SIXTH

LONDON

Printed by J. G. DODD, at the Press of the University of London

ALBION

THE
CENTAUR
NOT
FABULOUS
IN
Six LETTERS to a FRIEND,
ON THE
LIFE in VOGUE.

Doth he not speak parables?

Ezek.

Vol. V.

A

— A work which in this age of frivolity, voluptuousness and irreligion, I would particularly recommend to the attention of my young reader, promising him in the perusal not less entertainment from the liveliness of its illustrations and the brilliancy of its wit, than improvement from the soundness of its reasonings & the animation of its style.

Image's Adornment & Sacrifice.
(2 Vol. pag. 350.)



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TO THE
LADY * * * * *

MADAM,

YOUR Ladyship's character is so well known, that the public would blame me, if I presented not these papers to *You*, who can so readily put them into the hands of those who want them most.

You will, probably, ask, why the *Centaur* is prefix'd as a title to them? The men of pleasure, the licentious, and profligate, are the subject of these letters; and in such, as in the fabled Centaur, the brute runs away with the man: therefore, I call them *Centaurs*. And farther, I call them *Centaurs not Fabulous*, because by their scarce half-human conduct and character, that enigmatical and purely ideal figure of the ancients is not unriddled only, but realized.

Your Ladyship's curiosity is great; and you, possibly, are willing to know what account Antiquity gives of the family, or rather breed, of the Centaurs. It is as follows;

Of the Centaurs the most celebrated was *Chiron*. He was a great botanist; and our bitter herb Centaury takes its name from him. He thought all herbs bitter, because, being very amorous, he could not find any amongst them that could abate the fever in his blood; and he left a complaint in the Greek language to that purpose; which Ovid, sick of the same disease, has translated, and transmitted to posterity in his works.

But he was not only a botanist, but a great master of music: he composed an exquisite piece of harmony for young Achilles his pupil, which charmed Deida-

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mia to his embraces; by whom he had Pyrrhus, in the court of her father Nicomedes, a little before he dropped his petticoats, and put on his boots for the Trojan war. But what will endear to your Ladyship Chiron's memory beyond any the most renowned in story, is, that he was not only the venerable father of Operas, but was also the son of a Masquerade; the very first of those numerous sons, with which that prolific entertainment has since multiplied mankind.

It happened thus: Saturn, false to his good wife Ops, had an intrigue with Phillyra. Seeing one day his injured spouse coming to disturb their intimacy, for escape he turned himself into an *horse*; which occasioned the noble equestrian figure of Chiron, his son.

This, Madam, was the very first of masquerades. You see the virtuous occasion and the laudable fruits of it. Jupiter's masquerading in the form of a *Bull*, was long after. Europe takes its name from *Europa*, with whom he ran away in that shape. And your friend Clodius says, that, probably, we celebrate *horned masquerades* in memory of it. This is the recorded origin of that nocturnal assembly; and, indeed, it is evident to common sense, that the masquerade had never existed, but for its then accidental, and since established, subserviency to love.

These, you will say, are wild fables; but they are not without their morals. This fable of Saturn and Ops, means, that jealous *Conscience*, the soul's lawful wife, will ever disturb licentious pleasure; and that there is no means of escaping the persecution, but by becoming quite brutal in it. This, and the following explanations of the mystical part of antiquity, have been overlooked by former commentators, though *Bacon* was among them.

There is a second moral in the present fable. Chiron, Madam, was a man, as much, I mean, as the gayer part of your acquaintance. Why then is he

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represented as a Centaur? For two reasons. He was, as I have said before, the son of Saturn, and a very lewd old fellow. Representing him as a Centaur, signifies, that beings of origin truly celestial may debase their nature, forfeit their character, and sink themselves, by licentiousness, into perfect beasts.

Secondly, it signifies, that the rest of the species, the sober part of mankind, prejudiced by the abandoned manners of such men, may naturally imagine, that they hear them neighing after their wives and daughters; galloping with more than human haste after temptations; and, therefore, rather insolently prancing on four legs, than decently content with two. This, probably, is the meaning: first, because prejudice greatly hurts our discernment, and transforms objects exceedingly; secondly, because all allow that a Centaur is a mere creature of the imagination.

But though Chiron was the most celebrated, yet he was not the most ancient, of our mythological cavalry. Ixion was a primitive man of pleasure; a gallant of Juno, and much in favour. Jupiter, less in his interest, interposed a cloud in her stead, which not long after was brought to bed of the first Centaurs. From that hour Juno commenced a scold; and in that character Virgil makes her swear, that if she can't find friends in heaven, she will ransack hell for them.

The amour of Ixion imports, the great height of our expectation, and as great depth of our disappointment, in illicit love; and Jupiter interposing the cloud, intimates, that Heaven decrees this disappointment; and that therefore it is madness to flatter ourselves with hopes of the contrary. The fable would farther teach us, that our imagination, fired by passion, imposes not only on our understandings, but our very senses, which take clouds for goddesses, and adored darkness as divine.

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You see, Madam, that gallantry is hereditary in this illustrious house, I should say *flable*: that, therefore, continence may be construed as an argument of bastardy. Who then can blame your gay friends for being loth to be bastardized and disinherited; to lose honour, patrimony, and mistress, together?

They keep clear of this imputation: but there is one particular, that speaks not so much in their favour; but rather calls their legitimacy in question. How comes it to pass, that the posterity of cloud-begotten fires should be so cloudless a generation, that not one spot of stupidity can be found about them?

But though spotless in this point, they are not so in another; which may set all right again. Deianira, as a charm to regain the love of her husband Hercules, who was gone astray after Omphale queen of Lydia, sent him a shirt dipped in the blood of the Centaur Nessus. But instead of answering her honest end, it gave him a distemper so virulent, that it proved mortal. To balance the disadvantage above, some say, this distemper, at certain seasons, still runs in his race. Others rob our modern Centaurs of that credit; imputing their disorder to another cause. And, indeed, the present story tells us, that ladies may convey somewhat else, when they mean only to make a present of their love.

But worse than distemper is to be feared. You know, Madam, Ixion's remarkable punishment; but, probably, not the full import of it. Jupiter, for the father's sake, detesting his whole posterity, designed Ixion's wheel, not only as an emblem of their endless rotation in unaltered circles of present pleasures; but also, as a prophecy of their future pains, and an exact representation of that rack, which, Prudes say, they deserve for their family-feats.

And now, Madam, all things considered, have I named them wrong? I have named them, as most men

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of ancient renown were, from their personal qualities and exploits. If you still think me to blame, I flatter myself you will change your mind when you have read the letters following.

This address to your Ladyship, will my sober readers say, is itself a Centaur, of the Pegasean kind, in which the untamed imagination has too much run away with the judgment, and carried it to enormous heights. If your ladyship will venture, however, to be my fellow-traveller, I promise to carry you safely to an eminence in Fairy-land, from whence you shall survey the most surprising and amusing scene. To comply with your taste, it shall even be a ludicrous one. Your favourite Centaurs shall be permitted to intrude even into the most solemn groves of sacred meditation. Their grotesque figures shall continually meet your eye, where you the least expect, and where the severe critic and the prude (all but Centauresses are prudes with you) will be most scandalized to find them.

As a pledge of this promise, accept of my Frontispiece. It offers a sketch which your Ladyship, who know our Centaur's secret accomplishments better than I do, may employ a better hand to perfect.

The statues of the renowned are set up in public, to kindle honest emulation. In most ancient schools of wisdom were the busts or portraits of the wise. What, Madam, if, for your modern academy, Hogarth should draw a Centaur, not, as usual, with his bow and arrow, but (what will hit my mark as well,) with Harlequin's sabre by his side; in a party-coloured jacket of pictured cards, a band of music before, a scaramouch-dæmon behind him, a weathercock on his head, a rattle in his hand, the decalogue under his feet; and, for the benefit of your scholars, a label out of his mouth, inscribed, as was the temple of Apollo, with *ΕΥΩΧΗ: ΣΤΑΥΡΩΝ*, in letters of gold, [In me,

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know thyself,] ? They, your scholars, will take it in the true philosophic sense, and wonder how it came into the mouth of so ridiculous, and, to them, so foreign, a monster.

As your Ladyship's assembly, of all our hyppodromes, is the most renowned, I hope you will favourably accept the wholesome provender I send you. It is of an anti-circean nature; and may, possibly, turn your monsters into men.

But I detain you: it is *Sunday Night*; and I hear a whole string of your high-bred, unbridled colts coming in full career; with a blaze in their foreheads, to outbrazen my rebukes; and a spring in their heels, to bound high at your balls.

"Quadrupendante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum."

This, Madam, you understand better than they. But you begin to frown, as you always do at praise. Fear not; not one word of compliment shall you have from me during our whole journey. I shall carry you at first a heavy trot through rough unbeaten ways, entertaining you unpolitely with discourse quite foreign to your way of thinking, such as passed in correspondence between me and a friend that would equally despise and be despised among such as you think yours. In the progress of our travels (which, I must honestly tell you, will only touch upon, not terminate in, Fairy-land) I shall carry you into an unknown country, where every thing is real, bright, and transporting. If there, compelled by the force of sovereign truth, I should not only assert, but convincingly prove, that you are of rank more than imperial, and present you with an unflattering glass, in which, notwithstanding, your own form shall appear with all the charms of an angel——But some breathing-time is necessary to prepare for such an arduous expedition. Therefore, I dismount for the present, and say no more.

I am, Madam, &c.



LETTER I.

ON

INFIDELITY.

LETTER

NO

11111111

L E T T E R I.

DEAR SIR,

MAKE no apology for your request; the world is your apology. The occasion calls louder on me, than my friend can possibly do; and robs me of the credit of having my compliance owing entirely to your desire. Alarmed at our reigning passion for *Pleasure*, you press me to write on that subject. Who can forbear? since, if the present canine appetite for it should increase, where is that Bedlam which can receive a whole nation into proper methods of cure?

Your enjoining me one task has engaged me in two. Prevails not *Infidelity* as much as *Pleasure*? And for ever they must prevail, or decrease, together. *Infidelity* is the parent of the love of pleasure in some; Eve doubted, and then ate: it is the consequence of it in others; most of Eve's daughters first taste, and then disbelieve. *Pleasure*, and *Infidelity*, reciprocally generate each other; and that necessarily; for faith is entirely the result of reason, and reason is impotent in proportion to the prevalence of sense; therefore sensual pleasure begets infidelity. On the reverse, he that disbelieves a futurity, must be fond of the present, and eagerly swallow its unrivalled delights; and therefore, *Infidelity* lets loose the rein to *Pleasure*, and gives it an ample range: he then, who would reduce one, must strike at both. Eve, and the serpent, fall together: *Pleasure*, like the first, plucks the forbidden fruit; and *Infidelity* says, with the latter, "Thou shalt not surely die."

These two, now national distempers, fairly divide us between them. One seizes the body; one the mind: and where these two fiery darts have taken

place, the Destroyer may spare a third; his work is done. What then must be mine? The task is hard to extract them; for they seem, at present, to be not only poisoned, but barbed, arrows, in the British heart.

However, I shall attempt, first, to make the Infidel, and then the Voluptuary, sensible of his error. I shall recommend belief and virtue, in the room of doubt and dissoluteness; and by (I hope) properly adapted devotion, assist their repentance; that necessary step of transition from one of these states to the other. And considering into whose hands these Letters will first come, (for I design them for the press); with regard to yourself, I shall give you your friend Eusebius's character at large; and with regard to your sister, I shall invite her, and her gay favourites, to a funeral, instead of a ball; and, then, I shall enter on subjects not unimportant, nor foreign to these.

As the mind is our superior part, I shall first speak of *Infidelity*, and then of *Pleasure*. And it shall be my endeavour so to speak of both, as to render it the province of Wit, rather than Wisdom, to reply. What may silence Wisdom, will but provoke Wit, whose ambition it is to say most where least is to be said. You may as well attempt to silence an echo by strength of voice, as a wit by the force of reason. They both are but the louder for it: they both will have the last word. How often hear we men with great ingenuity supporting folly? that is, by wit destroying wisdom; as the same sort of men, by pleasure destroy happiness; prone to draw evil out of good, and set things at variance which by nature are allies. Happiness and pleasure, as wisdom and wit, are each other's friends, or foes; and if foes, of foes the worst. Well-chosen pleasure is a branch of happiness; well-judging wit is a flower of wisdom; but when these petty subalterns set up for themselves,



and counteract their principals, one makes a greater wretch, and the other a grosser fool, than could exist without them: Pleasure then calls for our compassion, and wit for our contempt. Of how many might the names have slept in safety, had not their unlucky parts awakened a just clamour against them!

Have we not a recent and signal instance, how far wit can set wisdom at defiance, and, with its artful brilliances, dazzle common understandings? That noble author * smiles at a certain text, of which I shall make a serious use, *viz.* "When the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, they begot giants;" so when great talents fall in love with mean purposes, they beget errors of an enormous size, both in opinion and in life. What more enormous than to let infidelity gather such strength, even in our decline, as to stand the terrors of a deathbed, and bequeath proud legacies of its poison to the world? Is not this stretching out our boldness even beyond the day of trial? carrying the war into the very borders (if I may so speak) of that dread Being we dare oppose? and desperately presuming to achieve that in our grave, of which a Julian of equal genius, though not of equal guilt, despaired on a throne, and that the greatest on earth? Julian was for defeating one prophecy; my Lord is for expunging them all; and, with like success, *Vicissit Galilee* may serve for both.

Take I too great a freedom? It is both folly and vice to bear any man ill-will; but it is also folly and vice, not so to behave, when occasion requires, as that our conduct may be mistaken for ill-will, if the prejudiced think fit. Why should our opponents call that ill-will, which they, if they were of our opinion, and thought us in a fatal error, and heartily wished us well, would necessarily do out of perfect love? If the Viscount's admirers resent out of zeal to his honour, I assure them, (though I have had no appa-

* Lord Bolingbroke.

rition,) that his Lordship, now on my side, thanks them not for the favour.

Time was, when those errors, into which he fell, would have been more excusable: for that truth was obscure, and falsehood specious, and opinions endless; and that, in these circumstances, the mind of man could find no rest, because suspense is anxious, and assent almost inevitably betrayed into mistake. This was the sad and just complaint of the Heathen world, which, by God's dereliction, had lost its way, and could not regain it by the feeble glimmering of natural light.

But of what have we to complain, who grope, and wander, and stumble, at noon-day? Ours is not ignorance, but perverseness; not want of a guide, but defection from him. Our noble author, so much admired because so much in the wrong, declares our light to be darkness; and with the boasted acuteness of his superior understanding, instead of couching those that are blind, is for putting out the eyes of those that see. Thus, Heaven's supreme blessing on us in the Gospel, is not annulled only, by our perverseness; but turn'd to much hurt. We are favoured to our misfortune, we are enriched to our loss.

The Heathens courted Truth as a mistress, with warm and sincere addresses; but could not obtain her. We, having obtained her, treat her, as an abandoned age the lawful partners of their beds, with satiety, and disgust, and a wild desire after new embraces. And what have we embraced? Thus runs, at best, the palatable doctrine of an age too knowing to need instruction, and too proud to bear it from Heaven itself:

“ Whatever notices of duty to *God*, or man, are
 “ imprinted in us by nature, or deduced by reason,
 “ these are obliging, and necessary to be performed
 “ by all, as the natural religion: but as for any po-

“*live institutions, or particular forms of religion;*
 “*these are of human origin; stamped in the political*
 “*mints of craft, interest, or ambition; a coin cur-*
 “*rent for the vulgar only.*” It is fit, it seems, that
 the vulgar should be fettered, that their superiors
 may expatiate more at large, and not fear to meet
 with rivals in them. And, indeed, if the vulgar had
 the same principles, and opinions, with many of their
 masters, their masters would have as fair a chance to
have their throats cut, as the murderer to be hanged
for it.

As to *God*, they say, “The natural religion com-
 “mands us to think worthily, and speak reverently,
 “of Him: But, as some have thought churches de-
 “rogatory to the notions of an omnipresent Being;
 “so formal prayers, and solemn services, are no way
 “necessary to a Being omniscient.” They present
 him (if with any) with a more sublime and philoso-
 phical devotion, stripped of all externals, invisible as
 the *Deity* himself, and, indeed, as incomprehensible
 to the multitude; whose religion, like themselves,
 must have a body, as well as a soul, or it will evapo-
 rate into nothing. Thus, under pretence of a com-
 pliment to one divine attribute, they rob all of the
 worship due to them. They pretend to give *God* ex-
 alted homage, as the Jews arrayed our blessed *Lord*
 in a purple robe, to mock him, not adore. And
 here our undissembled neglect, if not contempt, of
 religion, and our barefaced venality, setting all, even
 souls, to sale, cannot but recal to mind, that these
 sister iniquities, as if naturally connected, went hand-
 in-hand (as the historian tells us) towards the ruin of
 the Roman commonwealth.

“*Deos negligere, omnia venalia habere.*” SALLUST.

As to the duties of the second table, they tell us,
 that “the precepts of nature run evidently against
 “injuries and injustice: we must, by no means,

"commit rapine or murder; these are unfociable crimes: but as for any pleasurable enjoyments of ourselves, why deprive ourselves of these? why starve at a feast Heaven sets before us? We cannot conceive *God* to be a tyrant: to what end has he given desires, but that we should satisfy them? or appetites, but that we should indulge them? anger and lust, if constitutional, are venial sins."

Thus the sluices are set open for all sensuality, promiscuous incontinence, and studied arts of excess; to pour in uncontrouled; and by a second compliment to the *Deity*, as sincere as my Lord's pretended regard for Christianity, is varnished over a second violation of his laws. Bacchus and Venus are recalled to a new apotheosis under a Christian æra; and receive daily sacrifice in the fortunes, health, and common dignity, of man. What voluntary victims are we! and as victims of old were crowned with flowers, how gayly does poor devoted Britain bleed at their altars!

In answer to their pleas, it must be observed, that desires and appetites were not given us out of tyranny, but with an intention doubly kind; as a means both of pleasure and virtue, if gratified and restrained as religion directs. In both views they are blessings, but greatest in the last; yet an Esau will ever be for preferring the former.

Thus you see, Sir, that both the tables of the decalogue are broken, in a more terrible sense than they were by Moses at his descent from the mount: and from no dissimilar cause. The sufficiency of human reason is the golden calf which these men set up to be worshipped; and in the frenzies of their extravagant devotion to it, they trample on venerable authority; strike at an oak with an osier; the doctrine of *God's* own planting, and the growth of ages, with the sudden and fortuitous shoots of imagination; abortive births of an hour. These human improvements on

divine revelation may be compared to the profaning the Holy Bible with the figures of heathen idols, under Antiochus Epiphanes; or rather, to the proud Roman Emperor, who took the head from Jupiter's statue, and placed his own in its stead. These are bold men; but the boldest, we hope, may be reclaimed. That Almighty finger which wrote the divine laws twice in stone, cannot want power to give them a new impression in their apostate hearts.

And that they may the more willingly receive that impression, I shall observe, that, setting aside the immortal consequences of infidelity, faith is necessary on its own account, without relation to any thing else. Faith is not only a means of obeying, but a principal act of obedience. It is not only a needful foundation; it is not only as an altar, on which to sacrifice; but it is a sacrifice itself; and perhaps, of all, the greatest. It is a submission of our understandings, an oblation of our idolized reason, to God; which he requires so indispensably, that our whole will and affections, tho' seemingly a larger sacrifice, will not, without it, be received at our hands.

Does any question this? His Lordship's disciples will be very apt to question it: yet this is true; unless we can suppose the primitive martyrs to have laid down their lives for what was unnecessary to their salvation. For it was not an attestation of their doctrine, but their faith, for which the blessed apostles were persecuted, and the martyrs shed their blood; which they might easily have avoided, if they had insisted only on the moral precepts of their new dispensation. Their moral precepts were approved, and welcomed, by the wisest on earth. Nay, our infidels compliment them, especially when they would give themselves the greater weight in their opposition to our creed; yet, possibly, they had rather subscribe that absurd creed, than stand obliged to practise that morality which they so much commend.

To renounce or corrupt the faith (one or both of which is my Lord's point) abstracted from libertine gratifications to follow, or to get rid of fear from those past; there seems to be so little temptation, that I should think none would venture on it, but through ignorance of its guilt. Its guilt, therefore, I have pointed out; which shew, that modern Deism, how laudable soever the Deist's life, is criminal in itself. A virtuous life, rising from a corrupted faith, (if that could possibly be,) is as an angel of light supported by a cloven foot; which many seem not to believe, otherwise they would not be so often pleading the virtue of Deists as a full absolution of that sect: whereas we are expressly told, that "the just shall live by faith;" that is, even the just shall not live, that is, be saved, without it.

But though a corrupt faith is sufficiently criminal in itself, yet its guilt rarely rests there; it often produces an irregular life. On the contrary, vicious practice is sure to produce a corrupt faith, or an absolute renunciation of all belief: for the notices of good and ill are so fairly imprinted on our nature, and the practice of them is so strongly guarded by consequent hope and fear, that no conscience is so hardened as to sin without the shelter of some pretence. The guilty hush conscience with such soft whispers as these: Either, Heaven takes not such cognizance of our actions; or, is not so much concerned about them as some imagine; or, its mercy will not suffer it to be just; or, its justice will not suffer it to be so severe, as to punish temporal guilt with eternal pain: all which are corruptions of the faith. Or if these opiates will not do, they proceed to renounce the faith. They give themselves a quieting draught of absolute unbelief: a Deity is a dream, and religion a cheat. And thus they throw off their fears, their *God*, and common sense, together; and are deplorably gay, till they are irremedi-

ably undone. How happy might such wretches be, if they knew what a trifle pleasure is to peace ! A very trifle it is, even when pleasure is innocent : but when not ; when pleasure is an enemy to peace ; then, then indeed, it is a trifle no more.

There is a text which must give some surprise to those who doubt whether a bad life occasions a *false* or *no* belief. It is said, “ there must be heresies :” that is, false beliefs. And why ? there is certainly no fatal necessity for them from *God’s* destination—No ; but there is a moral necessity for them from man’s corruption. A heart boiling with violent and vicious passions, will send up infatuating fumes to the head ; and a delirious giddiness of head will make a man fall into the grossest mistakes, be his natural abilities what they will. A lewd and obstinate will fails not to blind the strongest judgment, as Delila the man of might.

Many, of even those that hold fast the faith, may perhaps not have observed, that faith is doubly precious ; it is our duty, and our refuge ; nay, it is doubly our refuge. It rescues our passions from flaming into vice ; and it rescues our understanding from darkening into errors. The same qualification which is necessary for us in order to please *God*, is as necessary to secure ourselves from imposture ; and not only from such impostures as others may prepare for us, but from our own. It is our sole security against our framing impositions to deceive our own judgments (as shewn above), as well as against our incurring crimes to defeat our salvation.

As to the mysterious articles of our faith,ⁱ which Infidels would by no means have me forget ; “ Who,” say they, “ can swallow them ?” In truth, none but those who think it no dishonour to their understandings to credit their Creator. Socinus, like our Infidels, was one of a narrow throat : and, out of generous compassion to the Scriptures (which the world,

it seems, had misunderstood for fifteen hundred years) was for weeding them of their mysteries; and rendering them, in the plenitude of his infallible reason, undisgusting, and palatable to all the rational part of mankind. Why should honest Jews and Turks be frightened from us by the Trinity! He was for making religion familiar and inoffensive. And so he did; and unchristian too. Those things which our hands can grasp, our understanding cannot comprehend. Why then deny to the *Deity* Himself the privilege of being one amidst that multitude of mysteries which He has made?

Here let me observe, what perhaps has escaped your notice, with regard to the blessed Trinity, which gives our unbelievers the greatest offence. The Revelation of it is not only necessary for our understanding the foundation of Christianity; but is also, I conceive, an absolute demonstration of its truth. Because it is a mystery, which by Nature could not possibly have entered into the imagination of man; which they, who most explode it, confess, by their obstinate rejection of it. For why do they reject it, but on that very account? Our opponents, therefore, in some measure, support us in our attachment to this supreme article of our Creed, which they most condemn; and (what is somewhat remarkable in favour of our faith) support us in it by the very cause for which it is condemned by them.

Mysteries, that is, those great and hidden things of our religion, whose truth we are assured of by divine authority, but the manner of their being surpasses our understanding; such as, The plurality of Persons in the Divine Unity; *God* manifest in the flesh; the operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers; the spiritual presence of *Christ* in the eucharist; the uniting our scatter'd parts from the dust of death; all which the scriptures have expressly delivered as catholic truths: several of these, several heretics have

rejected; and the Socinians have, in a manner, rejected them all. Faith in these is more acceptable to God, than faith in less abstruse articles of our religion; because it pays that honour which is due to his testimony; and the more seemingly incredible the matter is which we believe, the more respect we shew to the relator of it. This (putting in a caveat against the ridicule of Infidels) may be called heroic faith, correspondent to heroic virtue, at which, out of prudence, they must smile.

This heroic faith may be more acceptable to God (some may say;) but, sure, not more useful to man. It may have a good influence on another life; but what account does *this* find in it? Who can shew me the moral effects of it?—From faith in these mysteries, man, necessarily, and more justly, adores the incomprehensible Majesty of God; and more justly and perfectly contemplates his own littleness, and disproportion of thought to those truths that are vouchsafed to his faith. Hence he heartily renders God a due honour for his testimony; and a due acknowledgment of his professed care of his church; and a due thankfulness for the mercy of his revelation. He renders a due obedience to his proper government, as a Christian, that is, the authority of the church; and a due assistance to the public peace, which is never safely built but on unity of judgment. And as to his private virtue, he keeps in due subjection the pride of understanding, that most vicious affection of the mind, which, if let loose, would be attended with a multitude of evils; and with one in particular, which occasions this letter. But though we could see none of these temporal advantages, yet would it be most reasonable in us to believe; unless we, who think it right to believe implicitly in those on whom our fortune depends, think it wrong to believe implicitly in him on whom depends our salvation.

But there is, I confess, some error on our own

part, with regard to mysteries. We, perhaps, have given some small excuse for our infidels contempt of mysteries, by more pious, than prudent, attempts, that have been sometimes made toward an explanation of them. A mystery explained, is a mystery destroyed: for what is a mystery, but a thing not known? But things not known may reasonably be believed: in the very strangest things there may be truth; and in things very credible, a lie *

It is with our understandings as with our eyes. Both have their mysteries: both have objects beyond their reach; some accidentally, some absolutely. We see not those objects that are placed in an obscure light, because there is a defect in the medium: we see not those that are vested with too much light, because there is a weakness in the sensory, unable to sustain such strong impressions. Thus it is with the objects of our understanding: some things we know not, for want of being duly informed. Salvation was a mystery to the Gentiles; but ceased so to be when revealed by the gospel. Other things we know not, because they exceed the measure of our comprehension. Thus, some articles of our faith are such mysteries, as by no revelation can cease to be so. They must be mysteries while men are men; while yet unblest with powers that are not indulged to this imperfect state. As it is bold and vain, so, perhaps, it has even been prejudicial to the truth, to labour at rational evictions of sacred mysteries; for, by these means, men attempt to comprehend the divine nature, by putting it under some injurious disguise; as we venture to gaze at the sun, after we have watched it into a cloud.

God forbid images of Himself, because it is impossible that any sensible representations could do otherwise than derogate from him that is invisible; nor can the diminishing imagery of our notions derogate less from Him that is incomprehensible. I presume not

Quintil. Institut. l. iv. c. 2.

to censure those who have made use of illustrations to the proper ends of piety; all I mean is, that fallible ratiocination should not be made the grounds of faith, whose proper basis is infallible testimony. Nor is it longer faith than while it rests on that; for when I believe, not so much what is revealed, as what my own reason pronounces to be true, I believe not *God*, but myself. I assume, not obey; and give proof rather of the pride, than humiliation; of my reason; whereas its humiliation is a principal end aimed at by *God's* so strict demand of our faith.

And, indeed, far from humiliation, and even common modesty, must he be, who hopes to give light to those mysteries which St Paul, with all his learning, eloquence, and inspiration, pronounced to be to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks, those most subtle of men, foolishness: that is, they thought it folly to believe them, because unintelligible; and because they did not apprehend, that there was any divine authority to compel their belief. And such Greeks have we; Epicurean Greeks, sensual, subtle, and unbelieving; and whose celebrated writings are of equal authority with

"Quicquid Græcia mendax"

"Audet in historia."

juv.

men who reject divine assistance as too officious, with a sort of disdain, as if it affronted their own abilities; and whose presumptuous opinions are industriously spread, by pest-men, thro' the land.

With the gross and horrid effects of such opinions, and their consequences, the distempered age groans, and kingdoms shake, and judgments threaten. And well they may. How many private families have their infamous secrets? how many public transactions their barefaced iniquity? High courts of justice have their *jus datum sceleri*, and blush not to plead precedent for the violation of their own laws; and the cor-

ruption of the times, for more corruption still. Is not this heaping mountain upon mountain against Heaven? and think we Heaven will never return the blow?

We have had already, nay, now have, some light and merciful admonitions from Heaven. But can it be thought, that an age of judgments, and pastimes; of riots, and distresses; of excessive debts, and excessive expence; of public poverty, and private accumulation; of new sects in religion, and new sallies in sin; and every other contradiction to common sense, does not call for more? I, Sir, am fastened in the country; nor know I much of that larger and fouler sink of debauchery in which you breathe. But even here I know too much. Where is that village that has not its suicides of intemperance; or its bold adventurers for still quicker death from the hand of public justice? And, to confirm that opinion above advanced, of the close tie and mutual growth of vice and unbelief, almost every cottage can afford us one that has corrupted, and every palace one that has renounced, the faith.

I know, Sir, you will tell me, that it is the business of our common piety, to deplore; of our prayers, to obstruct; and of our lives, rather than our harangues, to confute them. True; for if our Christianity is to be found no where but in our books, the Christian and Infidel may drop their dispute. A Tillotson, and a Bolingbroke, are on the same side: their contest is but verbal; their agreement is essential, and their association will prove eternal.

But, Sir, it is our duty to speak and write (if we can), as well as live, against the enemies of our Christian faith. I proceed, therefore, to observe, that the Viscount's arguments against the authority of the scriptures have been long since answered. But he is not without precedent in this point. This repetition of already refuted arguments, seems to be a deistical privilege, or distemper, from which few of them are

free. Even echoes of echoes are to be found amongst them; which evidently shews, that they write not to discover truth, but to spread infection; which old poison re-administred will do, as well as new; and it will be struck deeper into the constitution by repeating the same dose. Besides, new writers will have new readers. The book may fall into hands untainted before; or, the already infected may swallow it more greedily in a new vehicle; or, they that were disgusted with it in one vehicle, may relish it in another. I therefore ask pardon; what I mis-called distemper, I find, on second thoughts, is perfect prudence; but such prudence as, with them, would throw a Christian writer into the bottom of contempt.

There are more reasons for Deists to be dissatisfied with themselves than those already given. Infidel is an opprobrious name: but time was, when Deism was the true religion; and they are for still retaining the credit once due to that character. It is therefore fit for a friend to Christianity, nor less fit for a friend to them, to take notice, that it is impossible for a good man, that is, one aiming at the divine favour above all things, to reject an offered revelation, without inquiring into its title to the high character it assumes; and, that it is impossible (in my opinion) for a reasonable man to reject the Christian revelation, if he does inquire. He, therefore, who continues a Deist, in a land enlightened by the gospel, must be wanting in goodness, or reason; must be either criminal, or dull. None, therefore, can be more mistaken than they that profess Deism, for the credit of superior understanding, or for the sake of exercising a more pure and perfect virtue. Yet these are the only pretences which they do, or dare avow, for their fatal choice. Must not, then, their real motive be of a nature which they think prudent to conceal?

But to conceal it, is not easy. For reason, our defective reason, in many points of the last moment to

man, wants, wishes, calls for, a revelation; and cannot but accept, when offered, what it calls for: that is, reasonable Deists cannot but become Christians, where the gospel shines.

Or argue thus, (for it admits of various proof:) *God Almighty* would not have made a revelation, but in order to be received. And by whom received? doubtless, by the reasonable, and good. And if by some of them, why not by all? And if all the reasonable and good receive it, what must they be that reject it? Therefore revealed religion rejected, proves natural religion disobeyed. I said, above, that Deists were blameable, how good soever their lives might be: but now it seems to appear, that their lives cannot be good. Others, perhaps, have forborn speaking so plain, out of charity. I venture on it out of what I conceive to be charity greater still: for nothing that can awaken them can be kindly suppressed.

Cornelius, the centurion, though one of the best of men, thought not the belief of the gospel unnecessary to his salvation. But modern Deists, wiser, not better, than he, have their objections to the gospel. Their chief objection is against its mysteries. There is nothing mysterious, but with regard to things which we either can not, or need not, understand: cannot, through the limitation of the human intellect; or need not, through the sufficiency of other means, and motives for our leading good lives. To what amounts, then, this capital objection and charge against it? To no more than this, *viz.* That Christianity performs not what is impossible to be performed: for it is as impossible for its author, *Almighty God*, to do more than is needful for his gracious end, *viz.* the good lives of mankind; as to do what, in its nature, is impossible to be done.

Indeed, all their objections to Christianity seem to be no more, nor less, than playing the best card they have; than using the best expedient they can think

of, to keep themselves in countenance, and the world in the dark as to the true motive of their apostasy. Nor are their objections to be looked on, in those that are men of sense, as an argument of their disbelief, but their dislike. They wish not the mysteries removed; for that would rob them of a favourite objection. They wish not the darkness of the mysteries removed, but transferred; transferred from the doctrines, to the moral precepts. These are without a cloud: these are too plain for their purpose. None ever fully complied with these, but was easily reconciled to the mysteries of the gospel. The disgusted, despotic heart commands the passive-obedient head to fight its unjust quarrel, and say it is its own; so that Satan may blame them for some degree of hypocrisy in his favour, may blame them for only pretending to disbelieve. If, on the other hand, Christians were not also hypocrites; hypocrites, I mean, as to practice; they would rob the Deists of their most plausible plea against us; and either lessen their numbers, or increase their shame.

I hope that some of the Deists, at least some of those whose principles are endangered by them, may admit some little impression from what has been offered. I hope they may discern and own the self-accusation which is evidently implied in our Deists renunciation of Christianity: or, if I am mistaken, that they will set me right; for, if I have wronged them, I have wronged them much. For, in what a disadvantageous light appear these deserters from Christianity in these pages! A Deistical tongue, a Christian conscience, and a partly Pagan heart! what a sad composition is this! It is a far heavier charge than I wish to find true.

But it is a natural question, "How comes it to pass, that men of parts should so much disaffect the scriptures, so admirable, and still more and more

“ admirable, in proportion to the discernment of their reader?”

Can it be from ignorance? It may be so, if their hearts are worse than their heads; for there are parts of scripture which none but a good man can well understand; “ Rejoice always; and again, I say, Rejoice,” This must appear, to the vicious, absurd, because impracticable, and therefore un-inspired. To rejoice in tribulation, they have neither cause nor power. Thus, bad manners, almost necessarily render men infidels to holy writ. On the contrary, a good life is a key to the scriptures: “ The secret of the Lord is with those that fear him.” A text this, as unintelligible to the vicious as the former. As he had no experience, so neither has he any comprehension, of its truth. The good man comprehends and feels it too. Thus the scripture, like the cloudy pillar which it records, is light to the true Israelites, but darkness to the Egyptians. Hence acutest understandings, in religious debates, often lose their edge.

Can that cause we seek be vanity? It may be said of the Viscount's writings, as of Catiline, *Satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum*. Had his eloquence been less; had those talents been denied him which flattered him with hope of shining a first lustre in the lettered world, he had escaped a temptation, which has evidently been too hard for his prudence; and a common-sized head had, probably, left his heart in safety. So formidable a possession is an immortal pen (if his is immortal); a pen more fatal to its master than Cato's sword.

Or might not envy be the cause we seek? “ But can these men envy Christians, whom they quit on account of our unhappy mistake?” Man is not only desirous, but ambitious too, of happiness. He but ill bears that another should be happier than himself; because superior happiness is a natural argument of

superior wisdom or worth. The man of a libertine life, knows that the good Christian, if his religion is true, is, on the whole, much happier than himself. Therefore he wishes it to be false; and endeavours to find it so: and strong endeavours to be in the wrong, Heaven will punish with success. It will permit them to believe their own lie; that is, to fall on their own sword, which was drawn against the truth.

“Non hoc quaesitum munus in usus.”

VIRG.

And I am the more inclined to impute their opposition to envy, rather than vanity; because pure vanity is consistent with good-nature, and may be a very candid thing: but envy has bitterness, and ill-will; and ridicule is the genuine child of ill-nature; ridicule, that offensive brat, of which they are so fond.

Now, though nothing is more improper in important debates than raillery; yet I can make some apology for them. They may possibly perceive, that the load on their own misgiving consciences would sink them, were it not for the light expedient of forced mirth, like a bladder filled with wind, to keep them above water; and that they, sometimes, have their doubts, and misgivings of heart, it is reasonable to believe. To give full-established security, is the incommunicable privilege of the gospel.

For the reasons above, I venture to set down envy among the causes of Infidelity, though, I think, by others overlooked. And, further, I believe it to be a very principal cause of lettered Infidelity in the world. Other, but not greater, vices, are doubtless the chief cause of Infidelity in lower and illiterate life; where sense has no rival in thought, but tyrannizes alone.

But whatever is the cause of their Infidelity, be it ignorance, vanity, envy, or any other vice, their infidelity will naturally have some effect in our favour.

It is much to be hoped, that it will put us on our guard, and make us better men. Our leading a bad life, is playing into their hands. It is giving them an argument in the debate, against ourselves. Tho' the argument is bad, yet it is an argument still. And since they have none but bad arguments, and such they will make use of, we should not increase the number. This is like furnishing them with ammunition to protract the war: and though the war protracted will not hurt us, yet will it hurt them; and, as we are Christians, that should give us an equal concern.

Secondly, Christianity may thank its opponents for much new light, from time to time, thrown in on the sublime excellence of its nature, and the manifestation of its truth; opponents, in some sort, more welcome than its friends; as they do it signal service without running it in debt, and have no demand on our gratitude for the favours they confer. The stronger its adversaries, the greater its triumph; the more it is disputed, the more indisputably will it shine. With what pious pleasure must you see the brightest talents striking at it, with the most hearty good-will; yet dropping harmless, like old Priam's spear:

“*Telum imbellē sine ictu.*”

“*Conjecit; rauco quod protenus ære repulsum;*”

“*Et summa clypei nequicquam umbone perpendit.*”

VIRG.

Christianity, that great support of Man's welfare, and God's glory, like a well-built arch, the greater load of opposition and reproach its enemy lays on it, the stronger it stands.

Thirdly, Their antichristian writing may detect them: for since (as shewn above) a false faith, or no faith at all, is the natural consequence of a bad life, it is possible that the gentlemen in the opposition,

while they are giving us their opinions, may be giving us more : they may be discovering their morals, while they mean only to teach us their creed ; and thus they may carry, like Bellerophon, their own condemnation, while they imagine they are graciously conveying intelligence and new light to mankind ; so that the old proverb, *Bellerophontis litera*, may be a proper motto for the learned labours of them all.

But condemnation from others will be much more supportable than their own, if that should fall on them ; and where is he on whom it shall not one day fall ? If a man born blind, who had never so much as heard of the sun, moon, and stars, should suddenly receive sight, he would not be more astonished at the first rushing in of those material glories, than would the man, by vice struck blind to religion, be, at his first conviction of heavenly truths, *viz.* divine manifestations, awful revelations, fulfilled prophecies, numberless miracles, and one unbroken chain of marvellous expedients, from before creation to this hour, for our salvation ; those spiritual luminaries, those (dare I say ?) sun, moon, and stars, of the moral world, if *God* should give him light. Till then walking in darkness, he must mistake danger for safety, shame for glory, and mischief for pleasure. Like the blinded of Sodom, he reaches eagerly after, and presses hard for, enjoyment ; but of real enjoyment, of true felicity, he cannot find the door ; as I propose shewing in my next.

If some part of it may seem too severe, I must observe, that no man can strike fire with a feather. A fire elemental is diffused through all nature, though locked up in dark matter, and unapparent in most parts of our globe. Thus, I conceive, that there is divine grace spread through all hearts, (where not entirely quenched by vice), tho' unactive, and dormant in them. No slight animadversion can awake

it. It must be a blow of some force, that strikes it out of a heart of flint: and such there must be in these days of darkness, when few sparks of grace are apparent: such there must be when Infidelity prevails; for Infidelity and Faith, are the day and night of the moral world. One reveals, the other hides, heaven from our thoughts. Happy am I, if this letter shall occasion the smallest dawn on but one single heart, in this our grand eclipse. With you, dear Sir, the dawn is long since past: and that you may continue in the light, till Heaven, at that knock of faith which only will be heard, shall admit you into perfect day, where undisputed truth, and unmistaken pleasure, with endless glory, crown the Just; this is the prayer of

Your affectionate humble Servant.

LETTER II.

ON

P L E A S U R E.

LETTER

PLEASE



L E T T E R II.

DEAR SIR,

I NOW proceed to say something of Pleasure ; that subject which you so warmly recommend ; not aware, I believe, that it may be long before men, whose faults set the public eye at defiance, will learn to blush when alone in their closets. And till then, what hope of much reformation from the pen ? Besides, though our transgressions with regard to pleasure are great, yet they are not new. To the scandal of the Antediluvians be it spoken, there were British iniquities before the flood. To such a degree have all moral subjects been exhausted, that it is difficult for a writer on them not to repeat, though he is no plagiarist. But your desires are an apology for my deficiencies in compliance with them.

Whether we are more hardened in Infidelity, or softened in Pleasure, may be disputed : but none can deny that the love of pleasure is the root of every crime. Theft, murder, perjury, are a few of its fatal fruits ; nor the worst. But I shall not dip so deep in its consequences ; yet deep enough to render the name of a *man of pleasure*, which some affect for their honour, not only ridiculous, but detestable.

What an extravagant dominion does Pleasure exercise over us ! It is not only the pestilence that walketh in darkness ; but an arrow that destroyeth at noon-day. The moon hides her face at our midnight enormities ; and the morning blushes on our unfinished debauch : I am almost tempted to say, that our impudent folly puts Nature out of countenance. But there is no need by words to exaggerate the fa-

Wm. B. Tull,
more blud

tal truth. Our luxury is beyond example, and beyond bounds; it stops not at the poor: even they that live on alms are infected with it.

It has often been observed, that it is with states, as with men. They have their birth, growth, health, distemper, decay, and death. Men sometimes drop suddenly by an apoplexy; states, by conquest: in full vigour, both. As man owes his mortality to original sin; some states owe their fall to some defect, or infirmity, in their original constitution. But contracted distemper is the most common ruin of states and men: and what national distemper more mortal than our own? On the soft beds of luxury most kingdoms have expired.

If causes should not fail of their usual effect; if our national distemper, far from being cutaneous at present, should reach the vitals of our state, how applicable to this opulent, proud, profligate metropolis (which calls the sea her own, and whose vices, more diffusive, are without a shore) would be the prophet's sacred dirge over ancient Tyre; whose sea-born wealth, and hell-born iniquity, let it not be said, was but a prelude to our own? And yet if we proceed in our infernal career, that most infamous reproach may become too true.

The sublime and most memorable words run thus; and I cannot but think that, at present, they must have a formidable sound in a British ear: "Is this
 "the joyous city? whose antiquity is of days remote?
 "whose merchants were princes, and her traffickers
 "the honourable of the earth? whose revenue was
 "the harvest of rivers? and her exchange the mart
 "of nations? who sat as a queen; stretched out her
 "hand over the seas; and shook the kingdoms? But
 "she is fallen! she is fallen! Heaven has stained the
 "pride of all her glory. How sorely must you be
 "pained at the report!"

Has not Britain reason to be more deeply struck

with this part of Scripture than the rest of mankind? The prophecy as yet, indeed, thro' mercy, is unfulfilled in us: but if Britain continues, like Tyre,—
 “To sing as a harlot; to take the harp; to make
 “sweet melody; sing many songs; turn to her hire;
 “and commit fornication with all the kingdoms of
 “the world;”—her fall is to be feared, unless the fate of most former empires betray us into mistake; and that national poison which has ever proved mortal, is mortal no more. If the fate of kingdoms is lodged in a just and impartial hand, what but the grossest self-flattery can banish our fears? And if our fears are banished, leave it not unobserved that our very want of fear is a proof of our danger: for Heaven infatuates, when it determines to destroy.

“But such a general face of affluence and gaiety; are these signs of ruin?” Not signs only, but causes of it too. Not Babylon alone has been smitten at a banquet, and perished in its joys. Most nations have been gayest, when nearest to their end; and, like a taper in the socket, have blazed, as they expired.

Were our fathers to rise from their graves, they would conceive that their fortune had thrown them on some day of public festivity, nor imagine that every day was drunk of the same disease. By our gaiety, we seem to celebrate the perpetual triumph of the millennium; by our vices, to add to it the manners of the antediluvian world; and, by our security under them, to put full confidence in the divine promise that the world shall be drowned no more. If with the vices of the Antediluvians, we had their years too, more might be said in our excuse: but to weigh such a moment against eternity, shews that the balance is in very weak hands. The world, which the divine vengeance swept away for its enormities, was incapable of so great a guilt.

But in so general a dissolution of manners, are there

none that stand entitled to more particular blame? Are not our great patrons of luxury a sort of anti-Curtii, who leap into the gulph for the ruin of their country? Their country's ruin they threaten by the malignity of their example; while by the profusion of their expence they nearly finish their own. What a weakness is self-denial? what idle self-tormentors are penitents? what wretched lunatics, or gross suicides, are the noble army of martyrs, if these men are in the right? How cheap would their pleasures come, if they cost them nothing more than their health, credit, and estates?

Pleasure is in some sort more pernicious than direct vice. Vice has, naturally, some horror in it. It startles, and alarms the conscience, and puts us on our guard. Pleasure, under the colour of being harmless, has an opiate in it; it stupefies and besots. In the soft lap of Pleasure conscience falls asleep. Vice, losing its horror, becomes familiar. And as vice increases, some expedient becomes necessary to reconcile us to ourselves. Thus, looking out for some shadow of excuse, we naturally slide into groundless doubts, and become Infidels out of pure self-defence.

And, as pleasure makes us Infidels, by stupefying the conscience; so it makes us very bad husbands of temporal enjoyments, by darkening our understandings; and thus unqualifies us for the very point to which alone we pretend.

It is this cloud on their understanding which hinders our voluptuaries from discerning, that their blind rage for pleasure turns blessings into their reverse. Birth, education, and abundance, are great blessings: but, abused by pleasure into motives and instruments of indulgence, birth is more ignoble than obscurity, knowledge is more pernicious than ignorance, and abundance more a misfortune than want. Men of rank, (and of such I speak), if wrong, can scarce avoid sinning beyond themselves. How pesti-

lential their example falls on the lower world, which, under the welcome force of such illustrious authority, turns dissolute, as much for the sake of their credit, and fortune, as of their lusts; pride, and interest, bringing needless succour to loose desire; and Tyburn has sometimes reaped, what assemblies have sown. Great men in the wrong, are powerful engines of mischief, and, like bursting bombs, destroy themselves and all around them.

And as to the two supreme blessings and glories of man, their reason, and immortality; these, as they manage it, flame out into vengeance too great to be mentioned without horror. Their reason serves only to render them more guilty; and their immortality to render endless the sad wages of their guilt.

It is this cloud on our understanding which makes us so little masters in the very science we profess. Happiness is our study, but are we not dunces in it? We know not, or seem not to know, that all real enjoyment lies within the compass of *God's* commands, which abridge not, but defend them; that when we dip too deep in pleasure, we stir a sediment, that renders it impure and noxious; that (as much a paradox as it may seem) the best means of arriving at the true pleasures of the body, is to preserve and cultivate the powers of the soul; and that a good understanding is, in man, the source and security of mere animal delight.

Let these gentlemen take notice that I am not against enjoyment; I am as great a lover of it as they; for without a relish of the good things of this life, we cannot be thankful. Enjoy, but enjoy reasonably, and thankfully to the great Donor; that will secure us from excess. To enjoy, is our wisdom, and our duty: it is the great lesson of human life; but a lesson which few have learned, and none less than these who proclaim themselves masters of art in it.

It is this pleasure-bred cloud on the understanding,

which makes us forget, that virtue is the health of the soul; that all provision and parade from without, can make a sensualist just as happy, as the same can make an invalid; that both have pains adhering, necessarily, to their present state; that both have rather remedies than joys; that assemblies, balls, masquerades, &c. are but as well-stored hospitals, unnecessary to the sound, and but poor palliatives to the sick: though pretenders to more than health, they confess our distemper; and, what is worse, increase the distemper they confess; and that of distempers the worst, a wrong judgment in our most important point.

I grant, that in the boundless field of licentiousness, some bastard joys may rise, that look gay, more especially at a distance; but they soon wither. No joys are always sweet, and flourish long, but such as have self-approbation for their root, and the divine favour for their shelter. We are for rootless joys, joys beyond appetite; which is the sole root of sensual delight. We are for joys not of man's native growth, but forced up by luxurious art: dunned by great expence; and shone on, not by the divine favour, but a strong imagination, which gives them all their little taste; and makes them apt, like other crude fruits, to surfeit, and destroy. We are, in a word, for joys of our own creation, the seeds of which Heaven never sowed in our hearts. But we may as well invade another prerogative of Heaven, and, with the tyrant of Elis, pretend to make thunder and lightning, as real joy. I say, real joy; joy we may make, but not chearfulness. Joy may subsist without thought; chearfulness rises from it. Joy is from the pulse; chearfulness from the heart. That may give a momentary flash of pleasure; this alone makes a happy man. And happy men there may be, who never laughed in their lives; and in a situation, where reason calls for the reverse, there is not in nature so melancholy a thing as joy.

It is this intellectual cloud, which hangs, like a fog, over every gay resort of our moral invalids (though invisible to common eyes), which flings us not only into mistakes, but contradictions. How sick are we of yesterday! yet how fond of to-morrow, though devoted to the same cheat as the past! Which flings us into contradictions not only in reason, but contradictions to sense. We can't believe that fatigue, is fatigue; let its cause be what it will. Too much recreation tires, as much as too much business; yet one we swallow, are choaked by the other. The man of business has, at least, his seventh-day's rest. Our fever for folly never intermits. Our week has no sabbath in it. So much harder is the master whom we serve, than that of better men; and yet, to our infamous honour be it spoken, we are better servants than they. How do we run, labour, expend; expose ourselves, hurt our families, resist unbounded, eternal temptations to wisdom; offer up the rich sacrifice of conscience and understanding; watch; watch late; and all, but pray for his service? Quite jaded with protracted amusements, we yawn over them. The dull drone of nominal diversion still humming on, when the short tune of enjoyment is over, lulls us quite asleep. Like the bear in the fable, we hug our darling to death. Instead of rejoicing in tribulation (of which few among us ever heard), we sorrow in delight: for to speak the truth (though we would not have it divulged), we tread this eternal round of vanities, less for the pleasure it brings, than for the pain it suspends. It is a refuge, not a prize. Like criminals (as we are), we fly to it from our much-injured, unforgiving foes, from ourselves; which chide and sting us, when alone; when together, we support each others spirits; which is like sailors clinging to each other for safety, when the vessel is sinking. We fly from ourselves, because we first fly from our Maker. Wretched flight! hell is nothing but an entire:

absence from him; and every partial departure has its proportion of it.

But those deep draughts of pleasure which beset us, must answer for all absurdities; and, among the rest, for our entire ignorance of the nature of that world in which we live. Mirth at a funeral is scarce more indecent and unnatural, than a perpetual flight of gaiety, and burst of exultation, in a world like this: a world, which may seem a paradise to fools, but is an hospital with the wise; a world, in which bare escape is a prime felicity. *Effugere est triumphus.*

The numberless pains of body and mind; the dark, solemn approaches to, or dismal vestibules of, the grave, as well as opening graves themselves, are so thick scattered over the face of the whole earth, that an unpetrified heart can't look around, without feeling an inevitable damp, and general disconsolation; and venting a sigh universal for the whole family of Adam, for the lot of all mankind. Nothing but strong faith in eternal life could hinder tears from bursting o'er it: nor are tears too much; for sympathy is the chief duty of human life.

Were one tenth part of the wretchedness seen that is felt, it would strike us with horror. Heaven means to make one half of the species a moral lecture to the other. It surrounds us with deplorable objects, not more for the sake of the wretched, than for our own; that our compassion awakened, may awaken our prudence; and teach us what we have to do, by shewing us what we have to fear. Shall the rich, and the well-educated, throw their abundance down the sink of unprofitable and untasted delights, while untaught multitudes mistake and sin; and indigent multitudes shiver, and starve? While we think we are sparing expences, we are running in debt. How deep are we in arrears to the distressed! The distressed have, from reason, as just a demand on our superfluities, as we have, from law, on our stewards for our estates.

But this is no play-debt; and therefore, without dishonour, undischarged.

Is then my repeated censure of intellectual darkness too severe? I wish it were. But alas! how distant from their thoughts are the points the most important! how foreign to their interest, all that is nearest their hearts! When I speak of their darkness, I do not forget my own. There is not that man on earth that does not well deserve censure, and even from them. But there is difference in deviation from the right. Mulattos are not Ethiopians. I grant in their excuse, that, tho' all can see folly in pleasures past, yet must he be wiser than Solomon, who sees it in those to come. Yet wiser than Solomon, in this respect, must we be, or continue mere ideots; and ideots with regard to the present life; for this life's enjoyment lies, chiefly, in our title to the joys of the next; as earth becomes fruitful from the kind influence of the distant sun.

And now what occasion of advancing any thing more to the condemnation of those sons of Epicurus, and in disfavour of pleasure, than this, *viz.* That by awakening our understandings, it robs us of this world; and, by stupefying our consciences, of the next. So far are they from their boasted happiness, that even in the judgment of a heathen (not to mention the scripture, of much less authority with them,) they are dead while yet alive. "Is demum vivere, atque a-
" nima frui videtur; qui alicui intentus negotio, aut
" artis bonæ, aut præclari facinoris, famam quærit."
Sallust.

It is said of their master Epicurus, *Deos verbis reliquit, re sustulit.* By his and their goddesses, Pleasure, they do just the same. They loudly boast, and effectually destroy, it; the first through want of modesty, the last through want of understanding. But they must keep themselves in countenance, though out of heart; and make themselves some small amends

from vanity, for what is wanting to reason and to sense.

Nor tread they their master's steps in this alone. He out of a swarm of dancing atoms, was for making a world: they out of a giddy whirl of innumerable amusements, those minute particles of pleasure, are for forming happiness; a system equally philosophical, and of equal success. A God alone can make one; the god-like only can achieve the other; and where are they to be found in his hopeful school?

The one thing necessary for happiness is in common to both worlds; this, and the next. In vain we seek a different receipt for it, one in time, another in eternity. Virtue wanting, every thing else becomes necessary to happiness, and ineffectual. To what amounts, then, the boast of their numberless felicities? It brings, in proof of their happiness, a demonstration of their misery. "A good man shall be satisfied from himself alone." A bad shall be dissatisfied, with all the world at his devotion.

But there is a third particular, in which, if they had followed their master, it would have been more for their advantage and credit: an indulgent Providence has abundantly provided us with irreproveable pleasures; why are these swept away with an ungrateful hand, to make room for poisons of our own deadly composition to be placed in their stead? Epicurus was in love with his gardens. But that is an amour too innocent for them; a garden has ever had the praise, and affection, of the wife. What is requisite to make a wise, and happy man, but reflection, and peace? and both are the natural growth of a garden. Nor is a garden only a promoter of a good man's happiness, but a picture of it; and, in some sort, shews him to himself. Its culture, order, fruitfulness, and seclusion from the world, compared to the weeds, wildness, and exposure of a common field, is no bad emblem of a good man, compared to

the multitude. A garden weeds the mind ; it weeds it of worldly thoughts : and sows celestial seed in their stead. For what see we there, but what awakens in us our gratitude to Heaven ? A garden to the virtuous, is a paradise still extant ; a paradise unlost. What a rich present from Heaven, of sweet incense to man, was wasted in that breeze ! What a delightful entertainment of sight glows on yonder bed, as if, in kindly showers, the watery bow had shed all its most celestial colours on it ! Here are no objects that fire the passions ; none that do not instruct the understanding, and better the heart, while they delight the sense ; but not the sense of these men. To them the tulip has no colours ; the rose no scent : their palate for pleasure is so deadened, and burnt out, by the violent stroke of higher tastes, as leaves no sensibility for the softer impressions of these ; much less for the relish of those philosophic, or moral sentiments, which the verdant walk, clear stream, embowering shade, pendant fruit, or rising flower, those speechless, not powerless, orators, ever praising their great Author, inspire ; much less still for their religious inspirations. Who cannot look on a flower till he frightens himself out of infidelity ? Religion is the natural growth of the works of *God* ; and Infidelity, of the inventions of men.

Spiritually blind, deaf, and stupid, they see not the great Omnipresent walking in the garden ; they hear not his call ; they know not that they are naked ; they hide not among the trees ; but stand in open defiance of his laws. Religion is far from them.

And where can we hope religion, if not in age ? And are there Hecubas to be found among the bright Helens of our times ? Is diversion grown a leveller, like death ? Can assemblies banish distinction, and shew us all dates, like church-yards ? the latter, for their years, is the more proper scene. Give me leave, Sir, to address them ; and address

them in haste: they may die by to-morrow. To-night they are shining at the assembly. Thither, for a moment, imagination transports me to attend them.

“ So various, Ladies! and cogent, are the reasons
 “ which might call you to this place, that I am at a
 “ loss which to thank for the honour it receives.
 “ Come you to admire, or to be admired? Your modesty declines the last. Come you out of kindness, then, to authorise those amusements you chuse not to adorn? or come you, out of compassion, to make these young criminals appear more innocent, than they could appear uncompar’d with superior indiscretion? or come you, out of piety, to return thanks at this religious house, for your so narrowly escaping the grave? or come you, out of pure generosity, to heighten the mirth of the night? Your point is carried. What borrowed ornaments are these? Is vanity still in its spring? Is the folly of hairless heads putting forth its gay blossoms in the December of life? Age cannot drop its dignity, and yet retain its privileges. It must be laugh’d at, if it will not be rever’d; and objects of reverence cannot enter at these doors. We reverence age, as we reverence noble birth; on supposition both: if our supposition proves false, our homage dies.

“ A little entertainment, you say, is natural. —
 “ What a portentous jumble of seasons, what a violation of nature is this; winter dancing with the spring! Where are the first partakers of your pastimes, when pastimes became you? Their very monuments are in ruins. What real connection of heart, or interests, can you have with any now alive? And without such connection, how insipid your commerce with them! Sure you cannot approve Mezentius’s connection of the living with the dead.

“ Hang your hours, though probably so few, so
“ very heavy on your hands, that you had rather
“ bear contempt, than them? Is it drowned by the
“ sprightly viol, or hear you yon solemn bell? Wants
“ that the power to call you to your closets, which
“ calls your grandchildren to their graves? Is it
“ thus you discharge the duties of age to the rising
“ generation? Whatever seeds of prudence you
“ would sow in their hearts, before they can take
“ root, these vanities blow away; especially, if you,
“ like the ladies of Lapland, heighten the * hurricane
“ yourselves.

“ Have you never heard, my good Ladies! of the
“ redemption of time? You carry yours to market,
“ and sell it for nothing; nay, you dearly buy it off
“ your hands. Can nothing but such trifles, such
“ murder of time, make you think that you are a-
“ live? Can nothing but the stroke of death convince
“ you, you shall die? To their beauty alone, too
“ much amusement is forgiven, even in the young.
“ What, then, have you to plead?—That which is
“ fairer than beauty, if you will call it to your aid:
“ Virtue can reconcile our aspect to wrinkles. It
“ can render age amiable, when bloom smiles in
“ vain. But vice and deformity, when twisted toge-
“ ther, is such a Gorgon, as turns the tenderest heart
“ into stone.

“ Pardon, Ladies! that I presume to call that
“ vice, which you will soften by some milder name.
“ What is innocence in youth, may be vice in years.
“ Besides, mark the mischief of what you call harm-
“ less expedients to smoothe the rugged path of life.
“ You spread that path with snares, to the ruin of
“ those you love. You make parental authority,
“ that natural safeguard of youth, their temptation
“ to folly; and filial obedience, so lovely, so pious,
“ the strange cause of their crimes. Through such
“ mazes of more than folly, when parents lead the

* Some assemblies so called.

“ way ; children, out of pure duty, may tread their
 “ wrong steps. Or, if they have more discernment,
 “ or more grace ; what follows?—What you your-
 “ selves will be shocked to hear, and I to tell ; a
 “ daughter blushing for her who bore her : Which,
 “ to my knowledge, and astonishment, has been the
 “ too memorable, and too deplorable case.”

Here I would fain leave off, and throw a mantle over the nakedness of our own sex ; but that would be too great partiality. It is too sure Adam also fell. As I have spoken to his daughters, I must speak, Sir, by your permission, now to his aged sons. I can speak with more freedom to these : I was forced to spare his daughters, out of decency.

“ Ye first on roll for eternity ! why this waste of
 “ time ? why is its date quite erased ? Your spruce
 “ appearance is a perfect forgery. And deserves it
 “ not the wonted penalty for it ? You, for whom it
 “ is almost as unnatural, as for a mole, to be seen
 “ above-ground, what mean you by trespassing on
 “ this nether world ? Or, if here, ye deserters from
 “ death ! to whose corps you belong, why list into
 “ so very foreign a service ? Death, the more he is
 “ forgot, the more formidable he grows. But how
 “ could you forget him, who have seen him snatch-
 “ ing from your bosoms such numbers of your friends ?
 “ Has he so often knocked at the next door, and so
 “ frequently shook his lance in vain ? Will you drop
 “ into the grave on your road to the ball ? You,
 “ who, one full age of man expired, commence a
 “ new, with all the wantonness of youth, by an an-
 “ tichristian regeneration ; a second birth into all the
 “ foibles of a sensual life ! Consider, what tender re-
 “ verence, what respect, mixed with compassion, is
 “ paid to years owning their infirmities, and support-
 “ ing them, as they ought. But infirmities of body
 “ dissembled, that those of the mind may be the more
 “ indulged ; a vicious mind stinging on a jaded body

“ into shame ; this calls not only for the scorn, but
“ detestation, of mankind.

“ Consider, Sirs ! is there not some mistake ? Do
“ not your minds, through disorder of the machine,
“ go too slow, and misrepresent the time of day ? Else,
“ how could men, who have not space sufficient left
“ between them and their graves, for life’s wonted
“ delusions to display their gay phantoms ; who can
“ hardly hope to repeat to-morrow the farce of to-
“ day ; still persist to be boys ? Young men, indeed,
“ may see visions of what never shall come to pass,
“ and be ravished with them ; but old men, in their
“ senses, cannot so much as dream dreams of delight ;
“ such delight, I mean, as yours. What delight can
“ these gay scenes afford you ? I should think you
“ should be more mortified than amused, where you
“ scarce can see a face that does not make you look
“ twenty years older than before. Hope you any
“ regard or affection among them ? No ; despair even
“ of toleration, but when these moderns, for amuse-
“ ment, dip into you, as into chronological tables,
“ to know what happened before the flood : find
“ friends in coevals, or despair.

“ Indeed, my good friends, in one sense, most cer-
“ tainly you are strangers upon earth ; why will you
“ not be so in the best ? That you might be so in
“ the best, is, probably, the sole reason you are still
“ alive. Men in years, and the clergy, are the two
“ natural supports of virtue and religion ; that is,
“ the two columns on which public welfare is built.
“ And the first is the stronger, as there is less preju-
“ dice against it. They both have higher obligations
“ to be wise than other men : and if the world sees
“ those higher obligations fail of their due effect,
“ their consciences will sit easier under the neglect of
“ their own. The clergy are volunteers ; the aged
“ are pressed by nature into the service of wisdom :

“ and if they both desert, vice may triumph without a battle, and virtue fall without a mourner.

“ Ye fine men of rank, and parts! a common soldier (your contempt, no doubt) shall reproach you. One of them requesting dismissal from Charles V. gave this reason for it: *Inter vitæ negotia extremumque diem oportet aliquod temporis intercedere.*

“ Much more *inter vitæ voluptates*, and our last hour. Will you go to your graves with your eyes shut, as Plutarch tells you the Spartans went to their beds in the dark? If so, as reasonable men in years enter their graves as a harbour, you will strike on yours as on a rock. You do not only expose yourselves, but your whole species. When they that have most reason to be wise, are the farthest from it; it sinks the dignity of our common nature; brings, beyond all other enormities, a reproach on mankind; and gives each individual, as a sufferer, as a sharer in the scandal, a just right not only of censure, but revenge.

“ This will excuse my indignation at two notorious offenders; and therefore I shall dare name them. Who are they, but Sedbury, and Torrifmond? Their pictures have been partly drawn by the famous Seymour; I shall sketch the rest. These are two perfect heroes in this transgression; old offenders in an offence, which, till old, they could not begin; who join the gallantries of Paris to the years of Nestor; who read a play-bill, and a bill of mortality, with the same sensation and aspect; who can amuse themselves with a cathedral service; and go for an hour's diversion to the funeral of a friend!

“ How many friends have they lost? that is, how often has their confidence in the world been shaken at the root? and give they still full proof of their obstinate adherence to and cordial incorporation with it? Has it not daily crumbled away in their

" fingers? and will they hug it still? How can their hearts still swell with those flattened bubbles of idle joy, so often pricked by death?

" Ye two antediluvian youths! what greater folly on earth than that of confounding seasons, and not giving their respective appropriations to the different periods of life? Nothing can be in credit, that is out of character; and credit you affect, no one more. If you would find it, let these gentle hints, like the light touch of a magic wand, make you shrink from your vernal bloom, and wither at least to the decencies of fourscore; for I would make you some allowance still.

" Know ye not that they who, in their wrinkled decline, outdive in folly the temerities of youth, and die immaturally at twice the age of man, are void of shame from censure human and divine; quite callous to *God* and men? Know you not that such faults, after seventy, are as severely judged by this world, as the next? To be born like a wild ass's colt, is natural; but not to live so, and retain the colt's tooth, when all the man's are fallen out. Time was, when to centaurize was less ridiculous: but unless your equestrian part is now dismissed, laughter is irresistible; as your friend Horace assures you:

" Solve senescentem matre sanus equum; ne

" Peccet ad extremum ridendus."

" Instead of surfeiting every public place with your ungodly omnipresence, you should be reserved as the great Mogul. A little self-annihilation would be the wisest way even for your own vanity; for the more we forget our age, the more we remind others of it; and the younger we would appear, so much older shall we look, in all eyes but our own.

" Yes, gentlemen! to preserve your dignity, retire like eastern kings. And kings, indeed, you may

“ be, and glorious ones too, if you will be wise: for
 “ wisdom is the crown of old age, and the fear of
 “ the Lord is its glory.”

Since the witchcraft of Pleasure is so strong as to turn young men into old, by their infirmities; and old into young, by their affectation and conceit; let us look a little more narrowly into the perverse composition of that marvellous being, which we style a *man of pleasure*; and make somewhat, if possible, like an analysis of it.

The man of pleasure, (tho' I fear he never asked himself the question,) of what nature, species, or rank in the creation conceives he himself to be? Does this yet unconstrued, undecyphered creature, consider himself as an immortal being? or only as a rational? or as a mere animal? If as an immortal, let him regard things eternal: if as a rational, let reason reign: if as a mere animal, let him indulge appetite, but not go beyond it; when appetite is satisfied, an animal's meal is over: if as a composition of all three, let it not be a confusion of them; let it be a composition; and order alone can preserve that name.

No; he is for neither of these. He is an immortal, without a sense of immortality. He is a rational, dethroning reason; and an animal, transgressing appetite: an unhappy combination, a wretched chaos of all, without the benefit of either; nay, a sufferer from each, because an abuser of all. They are not, as Heaven designed them, three parties in alliance for his happiness; but three conspirators, of his own making, against his peace.

For mark this immortal maze of human ruin; appetite, reason, and immortality, violate, and are violated by, each other. Subtle reason finds arts and arguments to tempt appetite beyond her bounds. Unbounded appetite with stupefying sensuality bribes reason to drop her dominion. Her dominion dropped, renders blind immortality regardless of things

eternal: and they being disregarded, all immortality's boundless powers, and desires, devolve on things temporal; and devolved on them, with violence impel deposed reason, and riotous appetite, to monstrous lengths of extravagance, which had otherwise lain quite beyond both their power and desire.

Thus stands the perplexed, and hitherto not unraveled, case. The man, in his constitution, debauches the brute: the brute debauched, dethrones the man; the dethroned man, and debauched brute, join in rebellion against the immortal: the subdued immortal resigns to them its infinite powers and desires; which they exert to the destruction absolute of all three.

The man, if not in alliance with an immortal, never would have had an unbounded power and desire. If not in alliance with a brute, he never would have debated them to mean and sordid ends; never would have confined them to things below: but being joined to both, and thro' perverseness and stupidity, rendering celestial immortality inglorious, and terrestrial brutality more brutal, he creates a far more miserable being than either of them apart could possibly have been. We may therefore congratulate the mere brute on his high prerogative, of being incapable of becoming such a monster of rationality as this. And the man of pleasure, if modest, will for the future give the wall to his horse. He, like Codrus, disguises himself, puts off his dignity to rush into danger; and happy for him, if he meets with nothing worse than death.

Reason, and immortality, the man, and the immortal, these only occasion the calamity; and the poor animal, an innocent ally, must suffer with them.

If your sister's favourites will contemplate themselves in any glass but their own, let them look in this true mirror; and tho' the features are somewhat

monstrous, let them not disown them; since they may change them when they please; and they are pictured so minutely, that they may be the more inclined so to do. For what a hideous ruin of humanity is this? The world, after the deluge, a less melancholy sight. Such shocking footsteps sin leaves behind it, in nature animate, and inanimate. Reason, and virtue, are the sole beauty, and sole salvation, of all. Through all her realms creation groans without it. The *Deity* is all reason in his nature, conduct, and commands. The great, invariable, eternal alternative, throughout his creation, is, or reason, or ruin. To how many ears, in this happy metropolis, is this dismal news!

I was going to say, that reason is the sole basis of happiness; but it is not. There are three kinds of happiness on earth, gradually less and less. There is a happiness from the exertion of reason, where reason is given: this is the happiness of a man. There is an inferior happiness from the gratification of sense, where reason is denied: this is the happiness of a brute. And there is a calamitous happiness, where reason is suppressed, or abused; and this is the happiness of a wretch. You see then in what line of happiness our fine men must be content to rank.

I know your sister will call my analysis above, a labyrinth of sophistry. I will therefore give the man of pleasure's character in a manner less perplexed, and which she may probably censure as too plain, and may wish a clue were wanting to find the meaning.

He is one who, desirous of being more happy than any man can be, is less happy than most men are.

One who seeks happiness every where but where it is to be found.

One who out-toils the labourer, not only without his wages, but paying dearly for it.

He is an immortal being, that has but two marks of a man about him, upright stature, and the power of playing the fool, which a monkey has not.

He is an immortal being, that triumphs in this single, deplorable, and yet false hope, that he shall be as happy as a monkey when they are both dead, tho' he despairs of being so while yet alive.

He is an immortal being, that would lose none of its most darling delights, if he were a brute in the mire; but would lose them all entirely, if he were an angel in heaven.

It is certain, therefore, that he desires not to be there; and if he not so much as desires it now, how can he ever hope it when his day of dissipation is over? And if no hope—what is our man of pleasure? a man of distraction and despair, to-morrow.

And who would buy to-day so dear, if it were so to be bought? as certainly it is not. Doubtless the true man of pleasure is he who preserves order in his compounded nature; and gives the animal, rational, and immortal, their respective dues. Who, as immortal, places in the Supreme Being his supreme delight: and, as rational, shunning superstitious austerities; and, as animal, too great indulgencies; admits of all secular enjoyments that are strictly consistent with his supreme. The true, and false, man of pleasure, are brothers; born of the same parent, viz. an inextinguishable love of delight: but so superior is one to the other, that, like the fabled brothers, Castor and Pollux, one may be said to be in heaven, the other on earth.

To be more explicit, I would gather three particular branches from this general root of happiness, and present them to your sister as a specimen of the rest.

There is no man of pleasure without his Eve; no Eve without her serpent; no serpent without its sting. He that knows not the pure delight and ever-grow-

ing tenderness of a chaste love, knows not the most that the fairest can bestow.

He that knows not the sound cordiality, and constant warmth, of a disinterested friendship, knows not the most that man can enjoy from man.

He that keeps not open a constant intercourse with Heaven by frequent fervours of rational devotion, knows not a joy still sublimer than both.

What are the joys of vice, compared to these? What think their deluded admirers, of a magnanimous triumph over strong temptation; of a sweet repose in divine favour and protection; of an indefeasible right to life eternal? Is there not a certain grandeur, and solidity of happiness, in this? Is not this better than ranging from the gaming-house to brothels; and with other little, fluttering, gilded, noxious, liquorish insects, to be fixing on every nuisance for delight? Sons of Beelzebub the god of flies. I like not a certain modest faint-heartedness in the friends and advocates of what is right. A Christian should let all see what an animation there is in Christianity, above all that the world may admire besides. Christianity should be the boast, as well as comfort, of our hearts.

And now if we inquire after the cause which has brought us into that fool's paradise, on which I have dwelt so long, we shall see with what good reason Pleasure and Infidelity are joined together in my plan.

The Scripture ascribes the conquest of the world, that is, of its pleasures, to Faith; and is very copious in enumerating renowned instances of it. Were faith as prevalent in us, we too should prove Alexanders in the moral world. All agree, that several goods being proposed for our ultimate enjoyment, it is impossible in our natures not to chuse the best. All agree, that God's promises are better than any thing we can carve for ourselves: and all agree, that they

are inconsistent with sin: so that he who will take out his portion in this life, must lose it in the next. What then, against our nature, and against our reason, hinders us from prosecuting our chiefest good? —Want of faith. All is resolvable into that alone.

For instance. Our temptations are of two kinds: from things that grieve, or things that please; the former fright, the latter allure us, from our virtue. From poverty, pain, disgrace, or persecution, we fly to falsehood, or fraud, for escape. But those ills are not the immediate cause of it; but want of faith in *God's* promises, that "He will succour us in those exigencies; and deliver us in his good time; and make all things work together for our good." On the other hand, when pleasure entices, and carries its point; we do not think those pleasures, be they what they will, preferable to heaven. But heaven is at a distance, and the soul is eager for present good. But why is heaven at a distance? For want of faith: for "faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." It antedates the existence of that which is future; and makes "our conversation in heaven, though we are still in the body; associates us with angels, though in our solitude; and give us greater joy in contemplation, than the world can give in hand." This is true, or the conduct of those heroes in Scripture had been impracticable! and they, like ourselves, were mere men. Thus Infidelity leads to Pleasure; and Pleasure confirms Infidelity; and both together consummate ruin.

These gentlemen seem to think that the world was made in jest; that there is nothing of moment, or serious, in it. There is nothing else. There is not a fly, but has had Infinite Wisdom concerned, not only in its structure, but in its destination. And was man made only to flutter, sing, and expire? a mere expetive in the mighty work, the marvellous operations, of the Almighty? Is joy their point? He that to the

best of his power has secured the final stake has a *sons perennis* of joy within him. He is satisfied from himself. They, his reverse, borrow all from without. Joy wholly from without is false, precarious, and short. From without it may be gathered; but, like gathered flowers, though fair and sweet for a season, it must soon wither and become offensive. Joy from within, is like smelling the rose on the tree; it is more sweet and fair; it is lasting; and, I must add, immortal.

As, therefore, I have above offered these gentlemen three expedients for happiness; to persuade their acceptance of them, I shall now give three short maxims, which will sit light on their memories, and (I hope) in time, easy on their hearts.

He that will not fear, shall feel, the wrath of Heaven.

He that lives in the kingdom of Sense, shall die into the kingdom of Sorrow.

He shall never truly enjoy his present hour, who never thinks on his last.

Let your sister, dear Sir, tell her grey pretty fellows who are apostles to these Gentiles, that if they can advance three maxims of greater truth, or three expedients of greater efficacy to happiness, than those above-mentioned, I am their convert; I exchange my Bible for Bolingbroke; and prepare for the ball; for *N. B.* I am but fourscore.

With best wishes to you, and those you love, that is, all mankind; I am,

Dear Sir,

Most affectionately,

Yours.

LETTER III.

ON

P L E A S U R E.

In ANSWER to One received.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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1968-69

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L E T T E R III.

DEAR SIR,

THE contents of your Letter damp my joy in hearing from you. Even a good man's approaching death strikes us with some concern. I am sorry that the sting which Pleasure left in your unhappy friend, occasions so swift a decline. How naturally we lay hold on Heaven, when the world sinks under us, and will support our hopes no more ! The piece of Devotion which you desire, you shall receive in my next. I cannot reflect on your friend's distress, and a noble youth whom I myself attended in his extremes, without dwelling still longer on Pleasure, which has cost the world so dear.

If Disease and Infirmary make us daily visits in the persons of our neighbours, and friends; and Death, by the same affecting messengers, gives us frequent notice that he will be with us soon :

If, when Death arrives, all mankind, however divided before, unanimously close in one opinion and one wish :

If libertine enjoyments hasten the approach, and heighten the dread, and embitter the consequences, of death :

If death is the single event sure, and virtue the single pursuit indefeasible ; and the divine favour the single point of absolute importance :

If that favour comes so cheap, that the very leavings (in time, care, and expence) of our real enjoyments, would go a great way in the purchase of it :

If the martyr's blood makes that purchase sure; and

it is impossible that martyrdom, and voluptuousness, should share the same fate :

If the fate to be shared is endless ; and this life but as a moment to an age ; and an age not a moment to eternity ; and eternity as much ours, as the present hour :

If he, that is over-fond of the present, or high in expectation from any future, hour, either knows not this world, or believes not in the next :

If all this is true ; that is, if it is day at noon : how happy, like your friend Eusebius, to strike early into the right path ; and not so long to lumber in indulgence, like the noble youth (of whom I shall soon speak), as to suffer the birth-day of our understanding to be the last day of our lives !

I told you, in a former letter, that I would give you your friend Eusebius's character at large ; not, to be sure, for your information ; but to place him in opposition to the man of pleasure : and so,

“ *Facem preferre pudendis.*”

JUV.

that their deformity may be set in a stronger light, for the benefit of those weak eyes, who cannot see a mountain without spectacles ; with whom a Centaur passes for a man ; or, rather, who think a man of pleasure an extremely happy creature, and, with ancient astronomers, place the Centaur in heaven ; their sagittarius there, or eternal hunter, ever aiming at Pleasure, and ever missing his mark. How very much, the character of Eusebius will plainly shew.

Men of pleasure, notwithstanding all the thorns they meet with in their flowery path, imagine all would enter it, but for want of taste, or spirit, or purse : Eusebius wants none of these. He wants not a taste for aught that can gratify either imagination or sense ; that can make a coxcomb, or debauchee ; but he is neither. Nor wants he a purse, or heart, to

provide those gratifications. His purse is large; larger his heart; but not corrupt, and nobly wrong. He is young, gay, rich, expensive. So far he is with them; but will leave them soon, as the sun slides from under an eclipse. His riches widen the circle of his virtues. Their riches encrease the number of their crimes. There are two kinds of expence: in both, riches make themselves wings, and fly away. But widely different is their flight: In one, they fly away as an eagle towards heaven; in their flight beautiful, and celestial in their end: In the other, they fly away as an owl to the desert; ungracious and ill-omened in their flight, and ending in the desert of ignominy and ruin.

Eusebius, though liberal to the demands of nature, rank, and duty; starves vice, caprice, and folly. These (the great cormorants of gold) he sends begging to their doors; they, as old intimates, welcome and embrace them all. And, if they have not thrice the fortune of Eusebius, must soon be beggars themselves. While he, with one half they sink in a debauch, lifts beggars (beggars, I mean from fortune, not from folly) into the real comforts of life.

He too has his amusements; but not such as deaden, but revive: such as recover the relaxed tone of application; re-animate to new effort; and thus are essential, though pausing, parts of noble, well-judging industry. He starts not at a masquerade; nor thinks cards the books of the devil: but thinks all our diversions like long books, that were better epitomized; or, like the books of the Sybil, which, as they were lessened in number, rose in their price.

He, as well as they, has his parks, gardens, grottos, cascades, statues, paintings, &c. but enjoys them more. Not because his are better than theirs, but because he is better than they. His paintings have beauties unborrowed from the pencil; and his statues, in his eyes, appear, like Pygmalion's, to live; though

mere marble in theirs. His all-animating joy within gives graces to art, and smiles to nature, invisible to common eyes. Objects of sense, and imagination, for their greater power of pleasing, are indebted to the goodness of his heart. For as the sun is itself the most glorious of objects, and makes all others shine, so virtue itself is the greatest of pleasures, and of all other pleasures redoubles the delight.

He and they, though they both value riches, yet entertain widely different opinions about them. He considers a great fortune, as his being put, by a kind Providence, into its honourable commission for doing much good. They consider it as a privilege, or at least as an excuse, for the contrary. He, surveying his ample arcades and lofty domes, rejoices more in what benefits others, than what aggrandizes himself: rejoices more in considering how many mouths he has fed, than in considering how many eyes he has drawn. He triumphs in reflecting to what numbers he has been enabled, by the divine indulgence, to turn, without a miracle, those stones into bread. They, from their huge Babel-like buildings, contract a Babel-like pride, which turns, with regard to those beneath them, their hearts into stone. Such men, in effect, build downward; are the more ignoble, that is, the lower, for their height.

He thinks, that Heaven's rich donations imply in them some transfer to the public: they think they imply a transfer of the public homage to themselves. Instead of imagining his grandeur to be a demand on the public for its homage, he looks on it as the public's demand on him for bounty, and patronage, of which they have erected such proud promises; and by them raised so just an expectation. He thinks, that their riches (how strangely soever it may sound) run them in debt; and that not to benefit, is to defraud.

His humility is equal to his magnificence; and as magnificence with humility speaks more regard for

others than himself, it escapes envy, and ensures general applause. Their pride defeats their magnificence, and robs it of that applause which is its single aim: for it is a great authority which tells us, "That pride is a tree which eats up its own fruit."

He knows (what they consider not) that splendid superiorities cannot be neutral, with regard to the characters of those who possess them; that, therefore, men possess them at their peril; that they must degrade, if they do not exalt, them: That Heaven, which, in spite of different ranks, levels happiness, designed it as the peculiar curse of the great (if they deserve it) to be lessened by grandeur, and illustriously disgraced: That, if Apes and Crocodiles, men hurtful or ridiculous, inhabit superb piles, they must despair of being worshipped; though, but through a vain and keen appetite for public incense, they never had been built.

You see in how many points these men fall short of Eusebius in pleasure from expence; which, notwithstanding, is an article on which they pique themselves not a little. And give me leave to subjoin one more particular, which will affect them less than the former, though it ought to affect them most of all: his wealth has subterranean channels; blesses unseen; and costs the relieved neither blushes, nor thanks. Not one prison have they opened; not one tear have they dried; which might speak in their favour, when their own begin to flow. The sorrows we have relieved are the surest support in our own. The best that can be said of their expences, is, that they are an unwilling encomium on those of your friend.

Sensual, of all our pleasures, are the meanest; how low must a soul celestial stoop for them! Yet these, our thirsty sponges of sensuality, who suck up every drop of it, in or out of their way, though they take up the dirt with it, prefer to all the rest. And in these, if in any, they will venture to dispute his supe-

riority: but for reasons, some already mentioned; more, most obvious; he is their superior in these. In pleasures intellectual, how far are they behind him! and then the moral, they are all his own. It is one of their minute and meagre pleasures, professedly to decline them: and these are the supreme. Moral pleasures, though faintly, (in this imperfect state), yet truly taste of heaven; and what is more, insure that heaven of which they taste. And what an inestimable superiority is this? He that can think of death undismayed,

“Extremumque diem vitae inter munera ponit.” LUC.

has more enjoyment, even in distress, than they in triumph, with every vain amusement turning reason out of doors, lest it should wound them with one whisper of the grave. On how many melancholy occasions in life should we be glad of an asylum to which to fly! How should we be transported with a thought that had infallible comfort in it! And that thought can be but one; and that one, it is the constant aim, labour, nay boast, of these wise men, to destroy.

Eusebius's love of pleasure is equal to theirs; whence then this vast inequality of happiness? He commands his pleasures; some he cultivates; some admits cautiously; others sends blushing away. Their pleasures domineer; scout them away on vilest errands; bid them throw their patrimony in the dirt of prostitution or debauch; or dungeon them in midnight dens of fraud and destruction; and command them to whirl it away with a losing card, or stamp it to nothing with a desperate dye. What scaffolds of fatal execution are those guilty boards, where moments determine on fortunes for life, and rage and distraction threaten ruin eternal!

From this thralldom to their pleasures, this wretched impotence of heart, it is, that while he has but one, and that a most gracious, master, they have as

many tyrants as there are follies and vices in the world. Ten times a-day they change their Pharaoh: and why? because his wages are so poor. They have it, indeed, in their power to change their master, but not to break their chain.

The Romans once pretended that they had a golden shield which fell from heaven: to secure it from theft, they laid it up among eleven others made of brass. This expedient had been unnecessary against their wisdom. They run away by choice with the eleven counterfeits, with a multitude of false ineffectual pleasures; and leave the celestial, as of no value, to men of less understanding—Virtue, the delight of Eusebius, is a celestial shield against every evil of human life. Their pleasures are rather swords, that “ pierce them through with many sorrows.”

The contrast how strong! Their pleasures die in fruition, and are remembered with regret: His survive the present actual enjoyment, and are as sweet in retrospect as in hand. Theirs lessen on repetition; his increase: Theirs create, and aggravate, calamities; his avert most, and alleviate the rest: Theirs hasten death, and heighten its horrors; his owe their perfection to his final hour, after having heightened, and lengthened, all the blessings of life. And what a wretch is that happiness, and what an idiot that wisdom, that can offer no comfort in the days of darkness and the hours of death! In a word, their wretched joys flourish, like dismal weeping willows watered by a ditch; poor the figure they make, flux and obscene the ground on which they stand: His flourish, like cedars of Libanus, from the fountains of heaven; and are rooted in a rock, the rock of his salvation.

It is this superior ground on which he stands, which imparts that inimitable sweetness of air, aspect, and deportment, which marks him among multitudes of the gayest, for the gay. They, like things gilt, have

much to shew, much more to hide ; are all darkness within. He, like a diamond, is transparent, and shines at heart. He looks, as if virtue, according to the wish of some sages, was at last become visible, and shone through him, in person, not precept, making a visit to mankind : and man is mended by looking on him.

Now, please, Sir, to observe, to what an astonishing degree that intellectual darkness, mentioned in my former letter, prevails in these men, that would outshine all the world. What is their chief boast ? Why this, That they make the most of this life. Whereas the very fundamental difference between them and Eusebius, is, That they make nothing of this world, because they design to make their all of it. He makes much of this world, because he holds it as little ; because, ever having the sentiments, without the terrors, of a death-bed, he never cuts off this life from the thoughts of the next ; but sees his whole existence, in one unbroken thread, extended before him.

But before I dismiss your friend Eusebius, though he has made you a very long visit, I must take notice of one particular more. These gentlemen pique themselves on their epitome of all virtue and religion, Benevolence. If they had it, it would confute most I have said, and make them very happy : for it may stand as a general maxim, That men are happy in proportion to their good-will : nor is it strange, that, to the greatest duty, should, by nature, belong the greatest reward. But their title to this virtue is not clear. The reason they so loudly pretend to it, is, because they know they have it not. The weakest side of a citadel is to be defended most. Eusebius, on his principles, must have universal good-will. Self-love obliges him to it ; and his own happy state of mind inclines him the same way ; for all are most kind to others, when most easy and pleased with them-

selves. On their principles, that this world is all; or at least, all they will concern themselves about; self-love obliges them to the contrary; and their uneasiness in themselves seconds that obligation; so that you may as well expect to find an angel among the dissolute, as a friend. And, indeed can any expect that they should love them better than their own souls? yet what would they do, if they cared for them at all.

But, instead of endeavouring to prove what needs no proof, I shall present you with the picture of one of these great lovers of all mankind, if you will promise not to out his throat; which picture, better than a Demosthenes, will prove my point. You will know whom I mean, when I tell you, that he is enamoured of the charms, and deep in the mysteries, of play. That is, he is so fond of riches, (which a good judge * tells us, "nemo bonus unquam concupivit,") of riches he is so over-fond, that he is quite miserable if denied a daily chance of being stripped to beggary. Greater professions of friendship can no man make than this arch-promiser; greater proofs of the contrary, can no man give. He never did a favour that proved barren to his own deligns, but he sent a curse after it. All his kindnesses are artificial lies; if nothing is caught, they are pocketed again. "Hook him, or hang him," is a favourite maxim of his own coining. He smiles, indeed, with great complacency on a crowded levee of devoted friends; with no less than on a hand of good cards. And his hope from both is just the same; that is, so to play them off, as to win his game. That done, if interest, or humour, bids, he throws them aside as a foul pack, and calls for new; to shuffle, and cheat, and play tricks with, as before. He considers fools, as trumps, with which he is sure to win. If there are no fools to be taken in, he makes a pretty good hand of it with a knave of the right suit. If he is

* Sallust.

so unlucky as not to be blessed with either, he gives out, and; for that time, plays no more: for, without a good hand, a bad heart is unsupportable. But prosperity soothes remorse, and lays conscience asleep. This is one who knows the world; which generally means, one that knows not God. He never thought of that great, final stake; with regard to which, he, that honestly but desires it, is sure to win; and he, that plays foul the most dextrously, is sure to be undone. Such is Avidienus; such is that good man, who, as freely as eat his meal, could lay down his life for his friend.

But, in excuse for such men, I must own, that, for such as place their all here, there can be no shadow of social happiness but from deceiving, or being deceived: from deceiving, and so finding some account in their villany; or from being deceived, and so finding some account in their folly. For real friendship amongst them is impossible: and indeed, to hope a friend in any man, that is not truly his own friend, is absurd. From this account, it is evident, that the chief fountain of happiness is dried up in their hearts.

A wretch, almost smothered with all the reputed means of happiness, would, of all objects, be the most ridiculous, were it not the most melancholy too. Diogenes went about the city of Athens begging to the statues: being asked the reason, he said, he was learning to bear a repulse. These gentlemen should learn the same lesson; no statue can be dearer than most of their pursuits, when they ask real pleasure of them.

These are the men, who, while Providence lays the reigns of free-will on their wanton necks, rush headlong into even unimportunate temptations. But when it shall put "its hook in their nose, and its "bridle in their jaws;" when it shall drag them into the condition of your unhappy friend; or worse,

when the tattered, convulsed body, shall be shaking out an unwilling soul, loth to leave it for a still worse habitation; then, oh! what a change!—It places full before me the last hours of that noble youth I mentioned above: last hours full of anguish! how fit to be remembered by those that wish peace to their own! This is the funeral to which, in my first letter, I promised to invite your sister Sempronia and her gay admirers; Sempronia, who delights *psallere, et cantare, elegantius quam necesse est probe*. And what invitation more kind than that for which she may thank me for ever, when other entertainments end? If they have their wine, this has its nectar; its cup of salvation, pressed from that Vine, whose leaves heal the nations, and whose swelling clusters teem with eternal bliss. Funeral solemnities are more for the sake of the living than the dead. What a trifle that honour they receive from them, to the benefit we may reap from that affecting scene!

Oh! Sir, how affecting! It is still before my eyes. That wretched youth dies again! Again, I am smitten with his death. It wounds me even in remembrance: what, then, the scene itself! No words can paint it; no time efface it: I meet it in my dreams; I shall bear it to my grave.

I am about to represent to you the last hours of a person of high birth, and high spirit; of great parts, and strong passions, every way accomplished, nor least in iniquity. His unkind treatment was the death of a most amiable wife; and his great extravagance, in effect, disinherited his only child.

But to my point. The deathbed of a profligate is next in horror to that abyss to which it leads. It has the most of hell that is visible on earth. And he that has seen it, has more than faith to confirm him in his creed. I see it now. For who can forget it? Are there in it no flames, and furies?—You

know not, then, what a scared imagination can figure, what a guilty heart can feel! How dismal is it! The two great enemies of soul and body, sickness and sin, sink and confound his friend; silence and darken the shocking scene. Sickness excludes the light of heaven; and sin, its blessed hope. Oh! double darkness! more than Egyptian! Acutely to be felt!

How unlike those illuminated revels of which he was the soul! Did this poor, pallid, scarce-animated mass dictate in the cabinet of Pleasure; pronounce the fashion; and teach the gayest to be gay? Are these the trophies of his Paphian conquests? these the triumphs to be bought with heaven? Is this he who smote all their hearts with envy at his pre-eminence in guilt? See how he lies, a sad, deserted outcast, on a narrow isthmus between time and eternity! for he is scarce alive: lashed and overwhelmed, on one side, by the sense of sin; on the other, by the dread of punishment! beyond the reach of human help, and in despair of divine!

His dissipated fortune, impoverished babe, and murdered wife, ly heavy on him: the ghost of his murdered time (for now no more is left), all stained with folly and gash'd with vice, haunts his distracted thought. Conscience, which long had slept, "awakes like a giant refreshed with wine;" lays waste all his former thoughts, and desires; and, like a long-deposed, now victorious prince, on his bleeding heart, imposes, inflicts, its own. Its late soft whispers are thunder in his ears; and all means of grace rejected, exploded, ridiculed, is the bolt that strikes him dead; dead even to the thoughts of death. In deeper distress, despair of life is forgot. He lyes a wretched wreck of man on the shore of eternity; and the next breath he draws, blows him off into ruin.

The greatest profligate is at least a momentary saint, at such a fight: for this is a fight which plucks

of the mask of folly, strips her of her gay disguise, which glittered in the false lights of the world's mummery, and makes her appear to be folly to the greatest fool.

How think we then? Is not the deathbed of a profligate the most natural and powerful antidote for the poison of his example? Heals not the bruised scorpion the wound it gave? Intends not Heaven, that, struck with the terrors of such an exit, we should provide comfort for our own? Would not he, who departs obdurate from it, continue adamant, though one rose from the dead? for such a scene partly draws aside the curtain that divides time from futurity; and, in some measure, gives to sight that tremendous, of which we only had the feeble report before.

Is not this then a prime school of wisdom? Are not they obliged, that are invited to this? For what else should reclaim us? The pulpit? We are prejudiced against it. Besides, an agonizing profligate, tho' silent, out-preaches the most celebrated the pulpit ever knew. But, if he speaks, his words might instruct the best instructors of mankind. Mixed in the warm converse of life, we think with men; on a death-bed, with God.

But there are two lessons of this school written, as it were, in capitals, which they that run may read. First, He that, in this his minority, this school of discipline, this field of conflict, instead of grasping the weapons of his warfare, is for ever gathering flowers, and catching at butterflies, with his unarmed hand; ever making idle pleasure his pursuit; must pay for it his vast reversion; and, on opening his final account (of which a deathbed breaks the seal,) shall find himself a beggar; a beggar past beggary; and shall passionately wish, that his very being were added to the rest of his loss.

Secondly, He shall find that truth, divine truth,

however, through life, injured, wounded, suppressed, is insuppressible, victorious, immortal: that, though with mountains overwhelmed, it will, one day, burst out like the fires of Etna; visible, bright, and tormenting, as the most raging flame. As now (oh! my friend!) I shall too plainly prove.

The sad evening before the death of that noble youth, whose last hours suggested these thoughts, I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said;

“ You and the physician are come too late.—I have neither life, nor hope. You both aim at miracles. You would raise the dead.”

“ Heaven, I said, was merciful—

“ Or I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to bless, and to save, me?—I have been too strong for Omnipotence! I plucked down ruin.”

I said, The blessed Redeemer—

“ Hold! hold! you wound me!—That is the rock on which I split—I denied his name.”

Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, 'till the clock struck. Then with vehemence;

“ Oh, time! time! It is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart.—How art thou fled for ever!—A month!—Oh, for a single week! I ask not for years; though an age were too little for the much I have to do.”

On my saying, We could not do too much: that heaven was a blessed place—

“ So much the worse. 'Tis lost! 'tis lost!—Heaven is to me the severest part of hell!”

Soon after, I proposed prayer.

“ Pray you that can. I never prayed. I cannot pray—Nor need I. Is not Heaven on my side al-

"ready? It closes with my conscience. Its severest strokes but second my own."

His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this (who could forbear? I could not,) with a most affectionate look he said:

"Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee.—Dost weep for me? That's cruel. What can pain me more?"

Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

"No, stay. Thou still may'st hope—Therefore hear me. How madly have I talk'd! How madly hast thou listened, and believed! But look on my present state, as a full answer to thee, and to myself. This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if stung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within the jaws of immortality, is doubtless immortal.—And as for a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel."

I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately:

"No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak—My much injured friend! my soul, as my body, lyes in ruins; in scattered fragments of broken thought. Remorse for the past throws my thought on the future. Worse dread of the future, strikes it back on the past. I turn, and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake; and bless Heaven for the flames;—that is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire."

How were we struck! Yet, soon after, still more.

With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair, he cried out:

“ My principles have poisoned my friend ; my extravagance has beggared my boy ; my unkindness has murdered my wife!—And is there another hell? —Oh thou blasphemed, yet indulgent, LORD GOD! hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown.”

Soon after, his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot. And ere the sun (which I hope has seen few like him) arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired.

If this is a man of pleasure, what is a man of pain? How quick, how total, is the transit of these Phaetontiadés! In what a dismal gloom they set for ever! How short, alas! the day of their rejoicing! For a moment they glitter, they dazzle. In a moment, where are they? Oblivion covers their memories. Ah! would it did! Infamy snatches them from oblivion. In the long-living annals of infamy their triumphs are recorded. Thy sufferings still bleed in the bosom (poor Altamont!) of thy heart-stricken friend: for Altamont had a friend. He might have had many. His transient morning might have been the dawn of an immortal day. His name might have been gloriously enrolled in the records of eternity. His memory might have left a sweet fragrance behind it, grateful to the surviving friend, salutary to the succeeding generation. With what capacities was he endowed, with what advantages, for being greatly good! But with the talents of an angel, a man may be a fool. If he judges amiss in the supreme point, judging right in all else but aggravates his folly; as it shews him wrong, though blessed with the best capacity of being right.

Such, so fatal, when abused, are the greatest blef-

sings of Heaven. Heaven grant his agonies were an expiation of the past; not a presage, and sad specimen, of the future! That his surviving companions and admirers may never suffer the same, give me leave to speak to them, while this affecting object is (or might be) in their sight.

“ Ye staunch pursuers of pleasure, opening in full
“ cry on its burning scent! who run yourselves out
“ of breath, health, credit, estate, and often life,
“ after that you cannot catch! for a moment, slack-
“ en your speed, and cool the fervour of your chace.
“ It is a friend that calls, and he is his own that
“ hears.

“ If there is a scene on earth, in which you can
“ find greater advantage, than in that to which you
“ have been invited, do not come: if there is not,
“ indulge me in a few words, which may not be
“ soon forgot; at least, they will recur to your
“ thoughts, they will recur to your feeling hearts,
“ when your present jovial chace is over, when plea-
“ sure is no more.

“ It will be grateful to your friend deceased,
“ whom you were always willing to oblige, if, with
“ his accomplishments, you remember his faults;
“ for then you will not forget your own; but read,
“ in his deep distress, a strong caution against them.
“ Affords not the rock on which he split, a solid ba-
“ sis for your safety? Has he not well-marked where
“ mischief lyes? See you not the wreck of that gal-
“ lant first-rate? or rather, is he not a beacon, light-
“ ed up by kind Providence, to guide you safe
“ through the dangerous voyage of human life?”

“ He once, as you now, imagined himself, in this
“ life, immortal. Was he not mistaken? He has ta-
“ ken his final flight; whither, who can tell? If you
“ continue yours in the same fatal track, who is he
“ that cannot tell where the folly must end? Smit-
“ ten, transfixed, when most secure, from the most

“towering heights he dropped, at once, into depths
“of distress not to be fathomed by man. In gaiety
“of heart defy not the danger. Are there not more
“arrows in the same quiver? And are not you as fair
“and tempting a mark? more tempting, if unadmo-
“nished, and mounting still over his forgotten tomb.
“And whom dare you tempt? an Archer that never
“missed his mark.

“But you, from your gay pavilion, embowered in
“roses, see no threatening prospects; no dangers of
“death.—Oh, Sirs! Death delights to ly hid in
“thickets of roses! How often the gayest fall first in
“his snare! Yet even this is too gentle, too mild, to
“answer the good-will of Heaven; it cannot keep
“the world in awe.

“What uncommon fortitude is needful to bear
“prosperities unhurt? It is now sunshine with you;
“and you think all is well. It is the season of in-
“dulgence—but seasons will change. You, that are
“now all social comfort, gathered close in glad clus-
“ters, and (like embodied birds of passage, bound
“for new climes) on your impatient wing for new
“delights! what will you do, when each of you, se-
“vered from the rest, an unexperienced, unexpected
“recluse, lyes sorely pained; dreading worse; none
“to converse with, but the two greatest strangers, his
“own heart, and Him who made it; and neither
“at peace with him? Say, ye strangers to care, and
“abounders in mirth! what will he do, when he
“finds himself still subsisting in a state, where none
“of those pleasures, for which alone he wished to
“subsist, can possibly any longer subsist with him?
“when the dark matter at the center will not be
“more foreign to him, than that which now beats
“high in his pulse, and flushes in his cheek; and
“stings him on to schemes, that laugh at such lec-
“tures as these? when he finds himself led, by the

“ soft hand of Pleasure, to those dismal gates, which she herself will never, never, never enter?”

“ Consider, my good friends! you still retain the name of Christians; and have heard of the Scriptures. To speak their language, if Christians are racers, you have not yet started: if warriors, your armour is not yet on: if labourers in the vineyard, you pluck down the vine, and get drunk with the grapes: if watchmen, your nap is not yet over. There is no man, but in some part of life, either stung by self-moved conscience, or alarmed by some providential event, as out of a long idle dream, starts at once into his senses. The longer the dream, the greater his surprise and pain; and, if he nods to the last, the pain and horror (as too well has been proved) is inexpressible.

“ Cannot that awful truth interrupt your slumber? He sleeps sound indeed, at whose ear a friend’s knell shall knock in vain. But setting friendship aside; granting that, with men of your cast, a friend dead is a friend annihilated; ask, I beseech you, pure self-interest one question; have you no concern in this death? Is it nothing to you?—Oh, much! very much! it cannot stand neuter. It is big with good or ill. It must hasten your amendment, or heighten your offence. Henceforth, the same crimes are sevenfold guilt.

“ Have you never consulted the workings of nature? Have you never been surprised with a serious feeling of heart? When I stand, tho’ a stranger, on the verge of another’s grave; when I see the shaken mould take possession of human pride; and hear the solemn sound of *dust to dust*; what swelling of soul, but instantly subsides? what salutary thoughts, but, at once, it inspires? The grave of one unknown, and dying a common death, would have this effect: what then, the grave of a friend, and of our own character; and that not good; and

"dying of the follies in which we live; and with ad-
 "monitions in his mouth, and horrors in his heart?
 "What heart impregnable to such an assault? what
 "thunder equal to such a groan? It would echo for
 "ever in a penetrable ear! in a penetrable heart there
 "would be wrought a mighty change!

"For see you not the mighty force that is implied
 "in this mercy? Heaven trusts not to your faith;
 "but gives sensible proof of what you have to fear.
 "And could it do more? Would a miracle suffice?—
 "You have it in a mercy so little deserved. If dan-
 "ger can alarm you, you now are alarmed. If
 "nothing can alarm you, nothing can save.

"I should grieve to have said too much. Yet
 "have I said too much, if my words serve only to
 "render more inexcusable that imprudence which
 "they labour to remove. Rather know your dan-
 "ger, and embrace the plank (though not of cedar)
 "which I throw out for your escape. Our fondness
 "for good, shuts our eyes on evil; we scarce allow
 "it existence before it is felt. But, remember, we
 "live in a most mutable scene; and have the fear of
 "to-morrow before your eyes. Not the keenest dis-
 "cernment can ken through the second of a minute.
 "To keep within the reach of mercy, is the grand
 "concern, and supreme blessing, of human life.

"My converted! or condemned!

"Farewel."

Thus, dear Sir, I speak to these gentlemen. I wish
 they do not rather chuse to show their parts, than
 their penitence; and criticise my speech, instead of
 their own conduct. If so, they demonstrate how
 very great occasion there was of it; though it proves
 ineffectual.

Most Yours.

LETTER IV.

ON

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L E T T E R IV.

DEAR SIR,

YOU seem to think, in your last letter, that our age is so far gone, as to be past recovery. I hope not. Aviola, a consul in the time of Gordian, revived on his funeral pile. I will not despair, but that British virtue, now, like the Phoenix, dying in its sweets, may start up from its ashes, and re-assume its former glory. I shall therefore proceed a little farther.

I grant, that the man of pleasure, as well as the good man, has his joy. But their joys are very different. They differ not only in their objects, but their kind; which is as yet a secret to them; and, possibly, to you. Joy from temporals, is a terrestrial joy: and, like all things terrestrial, has a dreg in it. If you observe your own heart, you will find, that joy from temporals has ever somewhat of a gay inquietude, a disturbed and tumultuous delight; like some liquors, all in an unquiet ferment and confusion, while they sparkle and smile. Joy from eternal; joy, I mean, on spiritual accounts, (*viz.*) *Mens conscia recti*; or, a delightful hope of immortality; or, an humble persuasion of divine favour, &c. this joy is celestial, and, like a fine calm summer's evening, is undisturbed, placid, and serene. The first is a passion, and that in the strictest sense; we suffer from it, as well as enjoy. Nay, some have suffered from it even to death. The latter seems to be, or to resemble, an inspiration, in which the divine cause takes away, or supersedes, our human infirmity; therefore, by our church, most properly styled the *peace of God*. Nor let Centaurs imagine, that this peace is occasioned by the smallness of the joy: no,

"It passeth all understanding;" and is, strictly speaking, a specimen, an actual part of heaven.

For, indeed, the supreme happiness, and misery, of rational beings, through all variation of circumstances, and through every period of their existence, is of a piece, or of the same kind; though, perhaps, in no two periods of it, of the same proportion or degree. Therefore, heaven and hell, how distant forever some think them, are really, though not fully, on earth. Where-ever, and when-ever, their causes, that is, virtue and vice, exist, they will exist in a measure correspondent to them. What then are the good and bad, but the wretched and happy? He, whose soul reposes on his firm trust in *God*, like the halcyon that builds on the waves, if storms arise, may be tossed, but not endangered. Or, grant the worst; those tumultuous billows that devour others, rock him to rest eternal.

When the good man lies down to rest, no fears from the dangers of the night break through his strong confidence in the divine protection. When he awakes, his first thought lays hold on heaven; which gives, through the consecrated day, such a sweetness of aspect and deportment, such a force and firmness to his felicity, that we may venture almost to say, "He cometh forth as a bridegroom from his chamber, and rejoiceth as a giant to run his course."

The man of pleasure has his little clouds at the brightest, the course of his happiness is retarded by a straw; and any considerable, scarce considerable, accident puts it quite to death. Not only the necessities or conveniencies, but the decorations and superfluities, of life, are vital to his sickly felicity. In any of them he may receive a deep or deadly wound. Whereas they are mere excrescences to the good man's happiness; and he has no more feeling in

them than in his hair, or his nail; nay, his happiness is of so strong a constitution, that it can stand real calamities unhurt: nor quits its serenity on the confines of the grave; which the man of pleasure but ill retains in the sunshine of life.

Of which strange inferiority one cause is very obvious. When all our hopes and fears are confined within this narrow scene, what an insupportable importance, what a tyranny over our passions, does this give it! what demigods does it make of superiors, who can bestow what we most value! We tremble before them. What mountains does it make of little things, because the greatest in our inventory! we turn pale, sometimes die, at their loss. But the first moment we take God for our protector, and his precious promises for our chief portion, our superiors, even kings, shrink to men, and crowns imperial lose their lustre. Little things are little, and leave our hearts at rest. As a taper to the sun, such the sun to the "glories which shall be revealed." Looking to the close of the drama, we resume our native dignity; nor are longer over-awed on the stage, by our fellows; or, perhaps, our inferiors, behind the scene; nay, sometimes, on it too: when, like poor Altamont, they are forced to change their plume for the warm cap of sickness; and are unbuttoning their buskins on the bed of anguish, terror, and death.

And must this, one day, be the case? after having run the gauntlet of disappointing, painful pleasures; and, for some years, being afflicted with delights; to drop unregarded, unlamented, infamous, into punishment far greater, for the punishment they have already undergone—Of human happiness what a dismal account is this! yet this is the true. Let us, therefore, inquire if it is not worse than they deserve.

Our men of pleasure affect much being men of
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honour too; that is, they are as proud, as they are dissolute: or, in other words, they will not stoop to mean and little vices; they deal only in great. They scorn to pick a pocket; but triumph in cutting a throat. If their immaculate honour is violated by word, look, or thought, then they trample all the laws of religion, justice, and humanity, without remorse. My inquiry will join the man of honour and the man of pleasure together. But how shall I inquire? how shall I know the heart of these men? and that only can inform me right. Let us then consider what these mens prayer would be, if they prayed at all. For what is a prayer, but addressing to some superior power the real desires of our hearts?

Thus, then, I will shew you an exact picture of their hearts. There was so masterly a copy of a capital picture of Julio Romano, taken by one of his scholars, that he swore it was his own original drawing. I hope so to copy their hearts, that they shall imagine, that it is not I, but themselves, that speak. The desires of their hearts, if cloathed in words, would run to the following purpose.—But, first, this caution: Let not that offend pious ears; which passes in an impious heart; and which, for the sake of piety (though, perhaps, not without some shock to it,) is drawn out into light.

THE PROFLIGATE'S PRAYER.

‘ O THOU! whose omnipotence is but a second
 ‘ attribute, an able servant to thy delight.
 ‘ Thou great fountain of pleasure! as such I adore
 ‘ thee. Pleasure alone makes me devout; and let
 ‘ devotion advance my pleasure: for I am not more
 ‘ devout than modest; I ask not, yet, for heaven.
 ‘ Give me my heaven on earth. Let Mahomet’s pa-
 ‘ radise descend, and bless me on this side the grave.
 ‘ Let my honour too shine before men; and let none
 ‘ see my heart,—but Thee. *Noſtem peccatis, et*
 ‘ *fraudibus objice nubem.* Give my lusts a long and
 ‘ prosperous reign over me; and let not religion
 ‘ approach to hurt me. Lead me into temptation,
 ‘ and give me strength to comply with it. And
 ‘ deliver me from all evil, that may mar my de-
 ‘ lights. Let me be (as I have been) a brute while
 ‘ I live, and an angel (if angels there are) when
 ‘ I die.’

Is the good man shocked at this? Yes; and the profligate too. Few know the foulness of their own hearts. A famous modern, when in age he had lost his understanding, passing by a looking-glass, cry’d out in compassion, “ Poor old man!” not knowing it to be himself. Thus the profligate, at sight of this mirror, equally ignorant, no doubt, will cry out in surprise, “ Horrid wretch!” I answer, therefore, to the question above, *viz.* Is it not worse than they deserve? That men of pleasure, themselves being judges, deserve the worst.

In contrast to this (and sure it wants an antidote,) accept that Piece of Devotion you desired on your friend’s account; and may it prove of some little service to him.

DEVOUT THOUGHTS

OF THE

RETIRED PENITENT.

‘ **Y**ES, blessed, ever blessed, be the divine indul-
 ‘ gence for this. How wanted, how welcome,
 ‘ this asylum! this recess! Here earth holds its peace;
 ‘ and Heaven’s voice can be heard; Heaven’s voice,
 ‘ if we listen, ever speaking in the human heart.
 ‘ Here let me commune with my so long anxious
 ‘ heart, which has frequently called on me for an
 ‘ audience, and found me pre-engaged: or else, the
 ‘ rude world broke in on our conference, and fatally
 ‘ pushed it off till a farther day; though (shocking
 ‘ to consider!) a depending eternity often chid my
 ‘ delay.

‘ While the noise of the world beats its drum in
 ‘ our ears, and its bustle and hurry throws its dust
 ‘ in our eyes, who can hear the soft whispers of con-
 ‘ science, or read the strong demands of reason, tho’
 ‘ written in capitals on the composed and disen-
 ‘ charmed heart? I now read, hear, and tremble. I
 ‘ tremble at that in which I once triumphed. I blush
 ‘ at that of which I once was vain. Oh, Pleasure!
 ‘ Pleasure! what art thou? The death of reason.
 ‘ And with reason dies the whole heaven, as well as
 ‘ character, of man.

‘ The cloud now a little broken, which wrapped
 ‘ me up in night, look round, my soul enlarged! and
 ‘ say, where, or what am I? An immensity around
 ‘ me! an eternity before me! a shadow, my pleasure!
 ‘ a moment, my time! a vapour, my life! And shall

' a moment, shade, vapour, engage all my love?
' engross all my thought? Shall it bid an angel from
' heaven wait my better leisure? bid the great Fa-
' ther of angels defer his call until to-morrow?—
' What, O my soul! if he should call no more?—
' Good God! if he should call no more! if he should
' leave thee to thyself!—Where, then, is hope?
' where, then, is man?

' Man, desperate man, the first moment he sets up
' for himself, and impatient of controul, takes the
' rein into his own mad hands; the first moment he
' is at liberty, he is the greatest of slaves. How
' shackled! how harrassed! how starved! In the midst
' of his riots, what a famine of joy! None can be
' wise for time, that are fools for eternity. Dreadful
' independence! the first moment man quits hold of
' his Creator, he drops, in destruction and ruin! how
' unfathomed his fall!

' Out of that deep, I call unto thee, O LORD!
' LORD, hear my voice. Dissolve the charm that ties
' me down to delights trifling, terrestrial, infernal;
' and give me wings to rise into day, and reach the
' things that belong to my peace. Where is the
' creature which thou hast made? Where is the heart
' which thou hast given? This sink of pollution!
' this nest of all vices! it could not come from thee.
' No, I have snatched it out of thy blessed hand, and
' let it fall in the mire. What is it to me, that *thy*
' *mercy is over all thy works*, since I am not what
' thou hast made?

' I have slept on a precipice, and dreamed I was
' in heaven. Slept on its very brink; though ven-
' geance frowned over me, and flames roared be-
' neath. What horrors awake me! what a gulph
' lyes before me! what mercy has saved me! Where
' had I been, had I died yesterday? Oh, let this load,
' this mountainous load, on my heart, sink me lower,
' and lower still, in adoration that I live! Had I felt

‘ these pangs before,—before I had been reclaimed
‘ —Thou that bearest up the pillars of the earth,
‘ support my spirits!—Where had I been, if yesterday
‘ had been my last? Where—oh where?—And
‘ eternal too!—Eternal!—O LORD GOD AL-
‘ MIGHTY! could thy thunder shake me more?

‘ Thou glorious GOD, who makest the thunder!
‘ let me climb above creation, and soar into thoughts
‘ of thee.—How I wander up and down, bewildered
‘ and benighted, thro’ the boundless of such a con-
‘ templation? Where, what, who, how art thou?
‘ Source of all being! Centre of all good! great An-
‘ cient of days! before the birth of time! beyond the
‘ comprehension of angels! filler of immensity! who
‘ lookest down on the highest, and the lowest dost
‘ support!—support even me.

‘ Support me while I labour at some idea of my
‘ GOD—but I labour in vain. Thou most obvious
‘ and most occult, most present and most absent, of
‘ beings! how much of thee is enjoyed! how little of
‘ thee is known! I am in thee, yet cannot find thee.
‘ I can neither go from thee, nor to thee. Clouds,
‘ and thick darkness are thy pavilion! wonders pas-
‘ sing wonders, through the moment of time, and the
‘ immense of eternity, guard, and aggrandize thy
‘ tremendous throne!

‘ Before such a judge, O my soul! art thou to plead
‘ thy cause; to pour out thy deep sorrows, and deeper
‘ sins; to tremble out thy complaint? Oh! let me
‘ annihilate myself before him. Nor wretch, nor
‘ man, nor angel, is any thing in his sight, till he is
‘ nothing in his own. Who, LORD! ever thought
‘ on thee, and was not confounded? and give me
‘ leave to add, who, LORD! ever prayed to thee
‘ (as he ought), and was not blessed? For which in-
‘ finite mercy, from the first thrones in heaven, to
‘ the meanest worm on earth, be paid all homage,

‘praise, and adoration; constant, profound, ardent,
‘and eternal!’

PART II.

‘Are they that pray, blessed!—But what is that
‘to me? Dare I to pray? To whom is prayer address-
‘ed? Oh, how dreadful in majesty! more dreadful
‘in vengeance! Dreadful to the blessed above! more
‘dreadful to man! more still to the sinner! what then
‘to the deepest in sin? May not I then say (as is said,
‘LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, of thy blessed Self,) “Hell
‘is open before me; destruction hath no covering?”
‘Where then shall I fly? I cannot fly from thy pre-
‘sence. I dare not stand in it. Should I sink to
‘the centre, I am still in thy sight. Even darkness
‘detects me! even sight brings me nigh! Oh!
‘Thou that dost light the sun as a taper, or tread it
‘out as a spark! why still in being, a wretch ever
‘destined to pain? Oh! let me be nothing, or let me
‘be thine.

‘And what a nothing, indeed, am I? What a no-
‘thing, compared, is man?—Thou that inhabitest
‘eternity! my foundation is in the dust. LORD
‘most holy! I was conceived in sin. GOD most
‘mighty! what weaker than man? Great! Holy!
‘Mighty! three Persons, and one GOD! Creator!
‘Redeemer! Sanctifier! three benefactors, and one
‘Being! with what indignation must thou behold a
‘wretch of such complicated guilt? a sinner to thee,
‘to the public, and himself?

‘And dare I then approach? The presumption how
‘great!—But greater to forbear. To sin is bad: to
‘despair is fatal. Oh most merciful JESUS, what
‘refuge but in thee! Yet dare I not meet thy face:
‘I come trembling behind thee. If I touch but the
‘hem of thy garment, I shall be whole. Even dogs
‘may eat of the crumbs that fall from their master’s

‘ table. — For that bountiful grant, what adoration
 ‘ is due! With prostration profound, I cannot but
 ‘ adore.—What adoration is equal? I cannot adore
 ‘ aright: or could I, I am unworthy to lift an eye to
 ‘ thy throne. My incense has no odour, my anthem
 ‘ no praise.

‘ But thou, LORD, wide as the arch of heaven,
 ‘ dost extend thy compassionate arms to receive a re-
 ‘ turning world. As the sands of the sea are thy
 ‘ mercies, and (with horror let me speak it) my trans-
 ‘ gressions. I have looked on an unfeeling heart, as
 ‘ a quiet conscience; on a multitude of sinners, as
 ‘ an apology for sin; and on the fashion of the
 ‘ world, as a repeal of thy laws. I have been thankless
 ‘ for what thou hast most bountifully given; senseless
 ‘ of what thou hast more bountifully promised; pro-
 ‘ voking under the greatest obligations; peevish, and
 ‘ impatient, under the smallest evils; riotous under
 ‘ thy judgments; and by thy blessings most unblest:
 ‘ I turned them into poison; and by my prosperity
 ‘ was undone.

‘ I have studied iniquity as a science: been vain of
 ‘ distinction in it; and ashamed of my duty: I have
 ‘ blushed at the glance of a man, and a man most mi-
 ‘ staken; and set my face as a flint against reason, and
 ‘ against thee: I have even borrowed infidel scraps
 ‘ for the credit of the day; and run in debt for de-
 ‘ struction: time given for repentance, I turned over
 ‘ to folly; and made the divine mercy a promoter of
 ‘ sin. Nay, I have sinned even beyond my power.
 ‘ What schemes have I laid, which thy goodness dis-
 ‘ appointed! How many crimes have I committed,
 ‘ which never came to pass!

‘ With such overflowings of ungodliness I quench-
 ‘ ed thy blessed Spirit. I have trod, with thy divine
 ‘ laws, thy precious blood, under foot. All this,
 ‘ LORD! thou knowest; and yet I still live: all this
 ‘ thou hast seen; and yet hast thou held thy peace.

‘ Thou hast shortened thine arm; and curbed vengeance in air; though called for (if daring can call for vengeance) to fall on my head.

‘ How long, LORD! hast thou forborne me? And forborne when thine arrows went abroad; though I stood in the first rank of offenders; nor ever lifted up the shield of devotion; quite naked in sin! My less vicious companions fell frequent around me; and dismal was their fall. I washed off its memory in the next welcome debauch: and the just cause of remorse but redoubled my guilt. By admonitions unadmonished, by thy mercies unsoftened, by my own sentiments unawed, by my own conviction unconvinced, I censured their conduct, and trod on in their steps. I deplored their sad exit, and passed on to my own; because spared, when most obnoxious, I thought myself immortal. In every path of pleasure, in every flight of ambition, what gay, sanguine multitudes of those born after me, and in every promise of life to be placed before me, have I seen rise, bloom, triumph, languish, decay, and die! What a mystery of mercy is this! and what a miracle of madness am I? Amid this mighty field of slaughter, am I still alive? —While I doubt if I still live, I live on in my crimes. Nay, my very repentance increases the number: repentance so languid; so far short of my guilt.”

PART III.

‘ LORD! from that stupendous height, towards which the cherubims lift up an eye in vain, bow down thine ear and hear. —O LORD! hear me not. For what have I to plead? what excuse to cover, what palliation to soften, my guilt? Can my confession of my sin weigh aught in my favour? I fear, not a grain: for wherefore have I confessed my transgressions? because I could not conceal them.

‘ Thou knowest even those that are unknown to myself. But then, LORD ! I have been tempted—Yes; and I have courted temptation. Frail nature has seduced me.—And have I not indulged my seducer?—Public example bore hard on me. And I rejoiced in that excuse. I have sinned with my fathers.—True, but I have sinned beyond them. What age for indulgence has so loosened the rein? and who, in such an age, has rushed farther in ill, than the wretch at thy feet?

‘ But is there nothing in counterbalance; no dawnings of good? no pretensions, at least, to virtue, to lighten the loaded scale? Yes; I have been an advocate for virtue—that I might remove all obstructions in vice. I have gone to thy temple—but left my heart behind. Nay, I have prayed—but wished not what I asked. I have aimed at humility—out of pride. I have given—but without charity. I have been kind, the very kindest of men—to gain the power of being cruel, as the most malignant of foes. My devotion to Thee has been absolutely declined: yet never have I repented, but of omissions in guilt; nor ever had a darling joy, but what is the parent of my present grief.

‘ On searching my own heart, that abyfs of corruption, I find there is hardly a virtue which my hypocrisy has not worn as a mask; hardly a vice which my presumption has not acted under it. By these abandoned means bringing into discredit virtue of others the most sincere; and making more heinous my own deepest guilt: to the public a scarce less pernicious pest, than a fatal assassin to myself. Thus, Lord! all my pleas but inflame my indictment; and seeking excuses, but discovers new crimes.

‘ But, as I discover new crimes in myself by my awakened reflection; by the gift of thy grace, I discover new goodness, new glories, new wonders,

‘ in Thee. I have lived in darkness, in the shadows
‘ of eternal death. I wrapped myself up in the
‘ world. I saw nothing—but what had been better
‘ unseen, what made me blind to Thee. But now
‘ thy divine attributes break in upon me, like the
‘ morning; and awake me to thy presence. I see
‘ Thee in every thing; and seeing, I adore; and ado-
‘ ring, tremble.

‘ Thine attributes, at once, all lighten upon me;
‘ and strike me, like him of Tarsus, thy less persecu-
‘ ting foe; they strike me to the dust. Thy most
‘ awful omnipresence; thy most incomprehensible
‘ glory; thy most unbounded wisdom; exquisite ju-
‘ stice; and ineffable goodness! goodness, how in-
‘ effable! and to me, LORD! to me insupportable.
‘ That chief cause of my confusion! severe upbraider
‘ of my conduct! and terrible aggravation of my
‘ guilt! If thy goodness thus pains me, what then
‘ will thy vengeance? when thy vengeance awakes
‘ (cover me, O ye mountains!) when thy vengeance
‘ awakes! Oh! mercy! mercy! mercy!—Thou
‘ mighty to save! oh! have mercy upon me!

‘ And mercy thou wilt have, thou Father of all
‘ mercies! of mercy redundant, inexhaustible source!
‘ Thou wilt not condemn him, who condemns him-
‘ self; who trembles at his own tribunal; who is
‘ scarce struck with more horror at vengeance, than
‘ at guilt. At such guilt! and to such a Master!
‘ whose bounties enabled me so signally to sin; and
‘ who, my sin so provoking, so long over-looked.

‘ But I repent. LORD! I repent—Yet how dry
‘ are these eyes! how hard is this heart! Strike thou
‘ the rock, and the waters flow. Let not him, who
‘ groans under his transgressions, groan under thy
‘ displeasure. Thou Giver, Guider, Lover, yea, Buy-
‘ er, of souls! and at what a price! who dost hear the
‘ very thoughts of the wounded at heart! hear, pity,
‘ spare! Nor let the LORD be angry, if I presume to

‘ add—Oh! spare thy paternal tenderness; oh save
 ‘ it from its aversion, its strange work. Vengeance
 ‘ is an alien to thy most amiable nature: Ruin is a
 ‘ subversion of thy most glorious scheme.

‘ Though common sense has deserted me, and a
 ‘ legion possessed me; though I have contradicted
 ‘ my own reason, and fought my own heart, which
 ‘ stood in defence of thy laws; tho’ I have struggled
 ‘ hard for madness, and taken ruin by force; yet let
 ‘ not compassion be quite a stranger in Heaven. Let
 ‘ not thine anger burn for ever. Wherefore is the
 ‘ LORD angry, because I am a sinner? What else canst
 ‘ thou forgive? Because my sin is great? If pardoned,
 ‘ the greater thy glory. Thy servant is wicked, but
 ‘ still a servant; thy son a prodigal, but still a son.
 ‘ Tho’ a son’s duty has been wanting in me; lose not
 ‘ Thou, boundless Love! all the bowels of a father.
 ‘ Am not I the work of thy hand? do not despise it.
 ‘ An image of thy majesty? do not blot it out. The
 ‘ price of thy blood? oh, cast it not away! Shall
 ‘ things incompatible combine to my destruction?
 ‘ Can I be related to ruin, and to thee? Let it be thy
 ‘ blessed pleasure to reclaim, not to destroy, me: if
 ‘ destroyed, thy foe will triumph: if reclaimed, there
 ‘ is joy in Heaven; and ten times ten thousand will
 ‘ sing praise round thy throne.’

P A R T IV.

‘ But if I am pardoned, who then can be punished?
 ‘ What stains can condemn, if an Ethiop escapes?
 ‘ The regions of darkness are part of thy creation;
 ‘ and horrors infernal were not made in vain. My
 ‘ crimes, in themselves, how great! As committed in
 ‘ defiance of infinite Majesty, they are greater still.
 ‘ What then shall I say? To what shadow of excuse
 ‘ shall I fly?—Pardon, LORD! the weakness of my
 ‘ reason, if I judge, or rather hope, amiss: thine In-

' finite Majesty seems to plead for me. Fain would I
' find an advocate in that: in that very cause, which
' most heightens my guilt.

' For what, my Lord! am I? A poor complex of
' littleness and vanity: the very centre of infirmities;
' a combination of all causes that can call for thy
' compassion: frail flesh, and fleeting spirit! a moth!
' a worm! a flower of the field! to-day, and not to-
' morrow! at morning, and not at night! not master
' of a moment! not a match for a breeze! a dream!
' a vapour! a shadow! a thing of nought! posting
' through daily doubt and danger, toil and trouble,
' into trodden dust and ashes!

' Such am I; such was I made;—and made by
' Thee: and now, LORD! wilt Thou make bare an
' arm almighty against me? wilt thou lift up a bolt,
' that can crush creation, against its meanest worm?
' (Oh! pardon what distress compels me to plead)
' thine Infinite Majesty, declares against it: that re-
' scues the sinner, though it enhances the sin. Does
' not my meanness disarm thy might? Is not the
' greatness of the offended, the offender's defence? I
' am, indeed, unworthy, most unworthy, thy favour:
' but am I not unworthy thy resentment too? Thou
' that sittest on the highest heavens, and seest worlds
' infinite dance beneath thee, as atoms in the sun!—
' Wilt thou, oh! wilt thou, not remember, that I
' am but dust?

' Yes, LORD! thou wilt remember it: thou wilt
' remember thy glorious self; what ancient days re-
' sound; what wonders love divine has wrought of
' old. For to whom do I cry? Art thou not he to
' whom none ever cried in vain? who created not,
' but to bless; commands not, but to preserve; nor
' punishes, but to reclaim: Who has not more re-
' lieved, than amazed, with his extremities of love!
' for, art thou not the same LORD, who, though
' most offended, as if thou wert the offender, be-

' sees us to be reconciled? Who mourns over the
 ' impenitent? and over the impenitent for sins against
 ' himself? and, when his sorrow cannot prevail, even
 ' weeps in their stead? Those tears obdurate Jerusa-
 ' lem would not shed, didst thou not take to thy own
 ' blessed lips, which overflowed at the bare prospect
 ' of its ruin? Who, without pious terror, without
 ' the greatest astonishment, can think on these things?
 ' or, who, without comfort, still greater than that?
 ' Nor end our healing hopes of comfort here; not
 ' only to beseech, commiserate, and weep, descend-
 ' ed the LORD of glory and eternal life, but to die.
 ' And what a death! and after what a life! A life
 ' of compassions, without number, and beyond mea-
 ' sure: What a shining progress, what a stupendous
 ' ascent in love! He meets the returning prodigal;
 ' looks compassion on denying Peter; rejects not mis-
 ' believing Thomas; admits sinful Magdalene; par-
 ' dons the taken adulterers; and associates to him-
 ' self, in paradise, (where angels cast their crowns at
 ' his feet,) a thief from the cross. What a marvel-
 ' lous and most adorable climax is this! And is it pos-
 ' sible for love to rise higher still? Oh! let it rise higher,
 ' and reach even me.

' What am I, Thou most exuberant Fountain of
 ' love! that I should set a bound to such compassion
 ' as this? Can ocean be repelled by a single grain on
 ' the shore? What a triumph of mercy to pluck the
 ' ruined from ruin! What an omnipotent action, to
 ' save the most lost! Though pleasure has fool'd me;
 ' though reason, conscience, heaven, nay, and earth
 ' too, in one scale, has been outweighed by a feather
 ' in the other; though, with Esau, I sold my birth-
 ' right for nothing; yet, LORD! let these distrac-
 ' tions of thought, these convulsions of heart, these
 ' pangs of the wretch, if not the prayer of the peni-
 ' tent, reach the foot of thy throne: for his dear sake
 ' who spared not his most precious blood; oh, spare,

“pardon, bless; yes, bless me, even me, O my Father! Yes, thou all surrounding, all-pervading, all-sustaining, and all-blessing Majesty of Heaven! bless me, even me, O my God!

‘Thou! who if thou movest thy lip, it thunders; if thou liftest thine eye, the sun is dark; who hast thy way in the whirlwind, and walkest on the wings of the wind; who sittest above the heavens, and hidest thy footsteps in the great deep! but (above all) whose superabundant effluence, whose ocean of love, overflows the whole creation! add to these wonders one wonder more—the forgiveness of guilt like mine; hear the suppliant voice, see the bleeding bosom, these throes, these throbs of the most vile and abandoned—but most repentant and heart-broken, of men.

‘Then, LORD! come the worst, I will not complain. My joy shall burst its way thro’ the frowns of the world, and the shadows of death. Then—“Blessings, and honour, and glory, and power, be to Him who sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb,” who nails sin to his cross!—Thus will I sing in spite of my groans! thus will I sing with my last expiring breath! thus will I sing for ever and ever.

‘Amen. O my soul! Amen, Amen.’

This, Sir, is that importunate, ardent, persevering spirit of address, which was suitable to the state of the person from whom I borrowed it. It may possibly (partly at least) suit some others. And I thought it inhuman, to gaze, so long as I have done, on the disease, without aiming at some expedient to mitigate its malignity. There is a sovereign balm in prayer.

I know, Sir, there are certain quietists in devotion, saints of great repose in prayer, who may censure this as too warm: but when should we be warm, if not when our eternity is at stake? Shall we be warm

in our vices, and cool in our repentance? Were our passions given for nothing? or given only as the servants of sin? Is it not heaven, but its reverse, that is to be taken by violence? I therefore drop this dispute, not only as unchristian, but undeistical too: for, if there is a GOD, all our affections are too feeble, all the wings of our soul are too few, to be put forth in pursuit of his favour; and being languid in devotion, is being solemnly undevout. If there is a GOD, he gave us our passions, as well as our reason; they, therefore, as well as reason, should assist in his service. And, indeed, reason without them, though it may loudly tell, will but lamely perform, our duty. How great a part of the scriptures must these mens kind of criticism explode? Poor David must break his harp, lest it give offence. Even angels have their passions; nor are any beings exempt from the need of them on this side the throne of GOD. Whatever exemption some may fancy in their own favour, let us, my friend, who have seen the necessity of devotion for others, not neglect our own; nor in the pride of instructing, lose the prudence of safety.

You, and I, my friend! lie under two disadvantages in this point: the world's example, and our own years. It is an undevout age: and will you not be surpris'd to hear me say, that ours is an undevout period of life?—Yet it is most certain, that there is a tenderness of heart, and a susceptibility of awe, with regard to GOD, as well as man, in youth, which, in most, is wanting afterwards. This want is an enemy we must fight; and fervent prayer, that sword of the spirit, is the best weapon against him. Prayer, because the most easy of duties, seems with many the hardest to be performed. It costs them so little pains, they think they may as well let it alone. Whereas, it is the supreme, the great mother duty: all other duties, and virtues, are its progeny; are brought forth, nursed, nourished, and

ON PLEASURE. 101

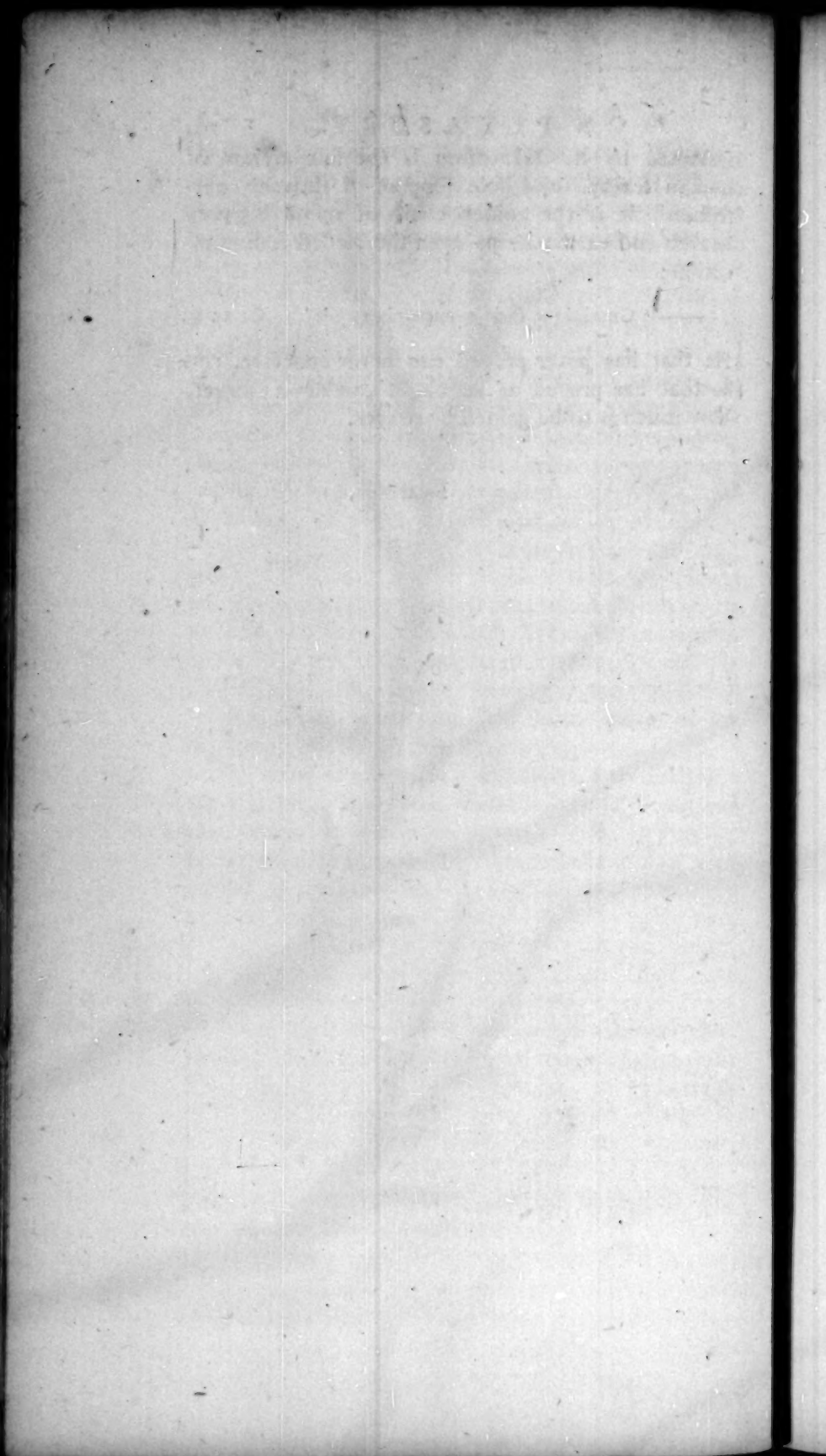
sustained by it. Devotion is the sole asylum of human frailty, and sole support of heavenly perfection: it is the golden chain of union between heaven and earth; keeps open the blessed communication;

—"Geminique facit commercia regni." CLAUD.

He that has never prayed can never conceive, and he that has prayed as he ought can never forget, how much is to be gained by prayer.

Dear Sir,

Yours,



L E T T E R V.

L I F E ' S R E V I E W ;

The General C A U S E of
Security in S I N ;

T H O U G H T S for A G E .

LETTER

TO THE

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF

L E T T E R V.

DEAR SIR,

I N this and the following Letter I shall touch on five points: Life's Review; the General Cause of Security in Sin; Thoughts for Age; the Dignity of man; the Centaur's Restoration to Humanity. The three first are naturally suggested to me by the world's wickedness, and our own; and our advanced time of life. The fourth, *viz.* the Dignity of Man, is naturally suggested by the notoriety of its reverse in those for whose sake these Letters are principally written; for who can look on Lucifer in his abyfs, without thinking of that height from which he fell? by which alone we can take any just measure of his calamity. And the fifth point, *viz.* the Centaur's Restoration to Humanity, is forcibly imposed on me by the transporting thought that such an event is possible. Yet, should it take place, posterity will scarce believe it. "*Annalium nostrorum laboravit fides.*" *L. Flo.*

I begin with the Review of Life; and that, though chiefly for our own sakes, yet also for the sake of all our grey-headed boys, as Sudbury, Torrismond, Ironside, &c. For though beasts of so gross a class as they chuse to rank with, scarce deserve to be brought to the manage, yet pupils not yet expelled the school of life, ought still, if possible, to be taught the lesson they have so long neglected: and I offer myself gladly for their tutor; though I fear they would prefer a tetanothrum * to an apotheosis. Their erudition will not leave them at a loss to know what I mean.

* A medicine to take out wrinkles.

There is nothing of which men are more liberal than their good advice, be their stock of it ever so small ; because it seems to carry in it an intimation of our own influence, importance, or worth. We (for you approved it ; we, I say) have bestowed abundance of it on our Centaurs, which I fear will bring us in but little thanks. Let us, therefore, return from abroad, come to ourselves, and see if our export of wisdom may not be wanted at home. We have censured the aged ; are we not such ourselves ? Is there no folly to be found, but at assemblies and masquerades ? or is folly not folly, because it hits our own taste ? Let us lay the line to our own conduct : let us drop foreign ware, and put ourselves into the scale.

Yes, my friend ! let us make a short visit to our former selves. They are, indeed, great strangers ; nor much to be liked : yet it is a visit all should make who wish well to the future of life. A Review of Life is an employment agreeable but to few ; because none can look back without self-condemnation, and none will look forward but with self-flattery. But though the task may be bitter, it is wholesome too. Ask you, “ What advantage from it ? ” — It is the only way of taking my Centaur’s advice *, and knowing ourselves. A man can see himself in retrospection only. When warm in action, he is ever looking on something else ; on his point in view : or, if he could see himself, he could not judge aright, either of himself or others. While warm in action, prejudices and passions, excited by the then present objects and incidents, corrupt his judgment : but in a cool review, he becomes rather a by-stander than the party, and is patient of truth. His then former rivals are no longer rivals ; therefore he judges better of men. His former points of view are no longer points of view ; therefore he judges better of things. He can judge, nay, he cannot but judge, as impartially of himself, as of the rest of mankind.

* In the frontispiece.

Wisdom is the growth of experience; but experience is not the growth of action, but of reflection on it. In an active life is sown the seed of wisdom; but he who reflects not, never reaps; has no harvest from it; but carries the burden of age, without the wages of experience; nor knows himself old but from his infirmities, the parish-register, and the contempt of mankind. And what has age, if it has not esteem?—It has nothing.

Starting, my friend! from the same goal, through different paths, which severed our fortune, not our affection, we have run our race; and now approach its end. Jaded with our long journey, the spur of ambition blunted, and our spirits off their speed, we are glad of rest. In which, reflection on the past is not only useful, but extremely natural. Look on the stormy sea, whose billows reach the clouds; then on the peaceful lake, where the feather, or fallen leaf, lies unmoved; and you see the difference between the cool evening, and warm meridian, of man. Reflection is as natural to the one, as action to the other. Unactive youth, and unreflecting age, are equal blanks in the book of life. Man varies no less than those varying insects at which he wonders. In his morning, he crawls; long ere noon, flutters and flies; at evening, chilled into langour, he creeps into corners, lies hid, and sleeps: or, if awake, having but little ground before him, nor that the best; how naturally he looks back on the past! how naturally his winter's evening calls for its tale! and to self-love what tale so natural as our own? how idle soever our tale has been, if we can draw some moral from it, that will abate its insignificance, and give it some little weight by making us wiser for the future.

And want we not to be wiser? On how many fruitless friendships, ill-judged enmities, rash presumptions, cowardly despairs, unmanly flatteries, bold indecencies, idle schemes, airy hopes, groundless fears,

opportunities lost, admonitions slighted, escapes unacknowledged, evils improved, blessings neglected, and trifles admired; on what a swarm of infirmities I look back with shame! How ambitious have we been in our attachments; not aware, that all most worthy our ambition, we can give ourselves! How fearful of expences; not aware, that till it escapes the gripe, and takes its flight into some prudent use, money is not wealth; that it truly becomes ours only by our parting with it! How fond have we been of applause; not aware, that human, separate from superior, applause, is the greatest vanity, as well as the most common pursuit, in life! How plainly I now see, that few things are more pernicious than too keen an appetite for applause, except a bold defiance of just reproach! That makes coxcombs, this felons; this calls for detestation, that for contempt.

How plainly do I now see, that our ignorance has been great! How often have we been so idle as to complain of our wants! that is, of our capacity of being happy: for, without wants, there would be no desires; and without desires, no gratification of them; and, without gratification of desire, no happiness; for human happiness, nay the happiness of all created beings, consists in nothing else.

What on retrospect appears to me to be the capital weakness of man, is, that strange ascendant which his wishes have over his understanding: it is this makes a Centaur. How often have we looked on our wishes as infallible arguments for the certainty of what we desired, when others saw it was an impossible point? And of this capital weakness, a capital instance is, that dying men can scarce believe that they shall die. Are we not now as those yellow autumn leaves, which the first blast sweeps away? Yet we seem to think the green bud hardly more tenacious of the stem.

On farther review, this is stranger still: our friends

are our strongest ties to life: when these are cut, what but folly can renew the charm? what re-engage our disenchanting hearts? and what, in my retrospect, is an object more obvious, or striking, than yonder ensigns of death? How the tyrant triumphs! What numerous monuments rise over the cold bosoms that once warmly received us! that shared our counsels, our ambitions, our pleasures, and our hearts! Their epitaphs collected would make a volume: a volume how instructive, if read aright! A friend's monument is a friend's legacy; and a richer to the confidante, than any parchment can convey. What, for the most part, is human wisdom, but the melancholy growth of a bleeding heart? The thought of death is the directing helm of life; and he bespeaks a wreck, who lays it aside.

O my friend! how rapid the human march! Men are in haste; how they hurry over the stage! Where are those luminaries in every various walk of fame, in every kind of excellence and renown, who most fired our ambition, and provoked our envy? Are they not passed away as April shadows over the field; or, by the fire-side, a winter's tale? Are not those far-seen shining lights gone out apace after one another, as little sparks in the fired leaf or paper, leaving us nothing but ashes behind? And in their ashes is there nothing to be found but sorrow? may we not light on a little prudence in them?

Sorrow, indeed, predominates. Oh, recent wound! sorrow how just! Whom lost we the very last moon? —Lost we? That is vainly said: whom lost the public? whom the whole nation? Few have left it more worthy all love, and esteem, than our friend deceased *. He was made by nature to be beloved; and intitled by virtue to be admired.

—“*Quem semper amatum.*”

“*Semper honoratum, sic Dii voluistis, habebō.*” VIRG.

VOL. V.

K

Sir J. S.

Well had it been, if we, like him, had sought esteem; but we would not pay the price. Love, we thought, would come cheaper; and seeking that, were in danger of losing both. The wise world will part with nothing but by force. Love can't be compelled: esteem may; and, when it is, we lay in it, at the same time, the surest foundation for lasting love.

My retrospect shews me a transitory love, of which we have been too fond: a love often bestowed by great ones, on those whom they cannot esteem. This love, supposing it sterling, I (*stultus ego!*) returned in kind; but I do not repent it. I may not repent of my virtue: for, my friend! there are two sorts of charity in the world; and which the greatest, is hard to say. We are bound, in compassion, to help the poor to live, and the rich to enjoy; who feel a pain peculiar to themselves, that of being mocked by abundance, which denies them their expected happiness; happiness in proportion to their purse. All I learn from such ardent lovers (for such generally they are) is, that it is dangerous to dip into most men below the surface, lest our curiosity should rob us of our good opinion of them. Much decorum, little homage, is requisite. My whole life tells me, that a just demand for esteem is sacred, but rare. We may well afford to pay it, when it is due. Nor must our love be withheld, where it is not. Universal love enjoined, is designed as an antidote against reciprocal contempt; and as a discipline to human pride, which must stoop to love men in their infirmities and faults: nor is it more our duty than our prudence; how else could we hope quarter for our own, which both tell us of others faults, and bid us forgive them? For many of them we should not suspect, but from the whispers of their parallels in our own bosoms. And therefore, by not forgiving them, we condemn ourselves. If, then, we would be forgiven by ourselves,

or others, we must forgive: A truth for which I thank my present review.

What I like least in this survey, for fear it should prove our own case, is this: I find old men apt to think well of themselves, not because they fly vice, but because vice is fled; repute themselves virtuous, because free from boys offences; set down impotence for victory; and triumph, because they have not fought, because they meet no foe. And what makes me even tremble, is, I see some, who, blameless in youth, are overtaken by folly when in years, and (of all sights the most deplorable!) I see them dragged by their white beards into the foulest enormities. Faults which are the natural growth of the distinct periods of life, may meet with some toleration: but the monstrous growth of vices out of season no man spares; because the hot-beds of Lucifer only can raise crimes, in which nature has no hand.

Heaven avert from us such an end! for, far from blameless was our beginning. In our early days (called the days of innocence,) we had our little villainies; our vice in miniature: as years and temptations increased, in years less ripe than in iniquity, we were no petty criminals before we were men. We wished, indeed, for wisdom: but what wisdom would have avoided, we made our favourite choice; what wisdom would have chosen, we bid wait till to-morrow. Frequent were our quarrels with our faults; but rarely pushed on to a parting. Pleasure had its charms, and virtue its efforts; and sometimes, in a passion, threw its rider. But triumphs of passion are but short: no rebukes are so powerful as those from our own conduct. Affords not this, then, a strong caution for the future? The distempers of the past periods of our lives are the best antidotes for those to come.

Retrospection informs me, it was, now, open war with our enemy; now, perfect peace. How easy sin

fat in our hearts; and called itself spirit, wisdom, any thing but what it was! When some merciful discipline awaked us from our trance, we fought; and we conquered: but what was our conquest? such as rather marred our wrong enjoyments, than wedded us closely to the right. We called the right our beloved, our spouse; but often committed adultery against it; thus losing the joys both of the sinner, and the saint: so motley a creature is man; as mutable, as God is fixed. Ours, indeed, was no uncommon case: but others faults are not our absolution. An absolution it is, however, with which many are content: though his Holiness could scarce give his saints one more ineffectual and vain.

Who is he, my dear friend, that can absolve us, or condemn?—Look through thy whole past life, and answer. What year, nay, what day, has passed unimpowered to vouch for his clement and absolute reign? See I nbt, in numberless instances, the naked hand of Providence stretched out, as it were, on this side the clouds, pointing us to good? Now shewing how little this world can give, by pouring on us the full enjoyment of it; to turn our hearts on a better: Now shewing us, by the calamities of others, how much we may suffer in this world; to keep us in awe, though ourselves were unhurt: Now breaking to pieces all our own schemes, and raising our happiness out of their ruins; to teach us humility, gratitude, and on whom to rely; shewing us, that most of our triumphs are errors; and our disappointments, escapes: Now bringing us, when most secure, to the brink of the grave; to repress presumption: Now snatching us from it, when past all human help; to kindle devotion, and forbid the pain of despair: Now defeating us, in spite of all our wisdom; now blessing us in spite of all our folly: Blessing, to sweeten life; the contrary, to wean us from it; and thus, in both

worlds; to provide for our welfare, as far as the nature of humanity will admit.

What a glorious image of divine goodness is this! The wisest cannot pay half its due in their highest opinion, nor the best in their profoundest acknowledgment, of it. And can we show as inglorious a portrait of human weakness in ourselves? How are our two different paths of life equally strewed over with follies! with follies thick as autumn leaves! but not thick enough to hide our faults: so numerous both, that I am quite disinclined to look longer backward; and hasten, for refuge, into some change of thought. And here, shall only add, that man overlooks the most instructive book in his study, if he reads not himself.

And now, I fear, you will say, that how useful and natural soever Life's Review may be, yet you can find but little pleasure in it. In it there is no pleasure to be found, but what has cost us some pain; but what we have fought our way to, through Nature's perverse bias and besieging temptations. Unbought pleasure is not the growth of earth: this is a militant state; nor must man unbuckle his armour till he puts on his shroud: for the most victorious veteran may meet with a defeat. Nothing in Life's Review can give delight, but what we may call our trophies, or spoils taken in war. All else is vanished as a dream!

What have I said? vanished as a dream!—— Would to God it was! 'Twas not! Far from it! Every moment is immortal! Every moment shall return, and lay his whole freight, nothing lost, its every whisper, every thought, before the throne: the throne of Him who sent it to man on that commission; and commands it back at the stated day, to make its report; to be registered in eternity, for the perusal of angels, and the justification of their King. Tell not gay triflers, that there is no such thing as a trifle up-

on earth. Can any thing be a trifle that has an effect eternal? Tell them, tho' they are so well assured that there is nothing serious upon earth, that time, to many, is, in some respects, a more serious season than eternity: that his eternity is absolutely the creature of time: that 'tis foul or fair, rejoices or laments, as Time, omnipotent Time! (that trifle which they throw away) ordains its fate. If they doubt it, let them ask their jovial companion, who died of their happiness last night:

Many, my friend! have made a worse, many a better, use of time, than we have done. Many have been more criminal; many more innocent. But most men imagine that innocent which has a negative guilt. An idle day is a guilty day, in a life so short and precarious; with more than human thought can carry, incumbent on it. There are more spots in the sun than in the life of a saint.

What then are we?—O my friend! at half a glance through life, I perceive, that, though we have made shift to creep out of the Augean Stable, yet have we not scaled the temple of Virtue: though we made the choice of Hercules, yet we wanted his strength: though we, sometimes, lopped one head of the Hydra; yet, too often, seven shot up in its stead. Whereas, on the contrary, they that have been long tossed by folly, when once landed on a good life, should burn their ships; as Cesar once burnt those of his legions on the British coast: I mean that the warmest resolution should destroy the very desire of embarking in ill; and so render a return impracticable,

Such, then, being our feeble attempts, so slender our pretence to wisdom, it becomes us to give those whom we have so freely treated, their revenge: to confess, that, though we are not quite horizontals, yet neither are we quite upright; and, though we

have set up for reformers, yet are we not altogether men.

A man, my friend! is a glorious being; a great rarity; there are but few to be found. A man is an exalted character, doubly great; he is an hero, and a king. Few kings are so great as to reign over their own hearts; few heroes so victorious, as to drive dominions, principalities, and powers, before them. Both these meet in a real man: he ranks, in reality, but a little lower than the angels; nor long so low.—O friend! man is a wonderful being! Anon, I will tell thee what thou art; and (mark what I say) I will surprise thee with thyself.

At present, only this—Dare we say, that we are arrived at this character I have mentioned? No. Dare we say, It was not in our power? No.—Why then this cowardice in a possible hero? Why this disloyalty to himself, in a possible king? Whence this reproach to reason, and immortality? Whence this inglorious and absolute desertion from our godlike selves? Sounds that too high?—In whose image were we made? I foresee your objection; I grant that image is impaired: but I quit not my point; I dare affirm, that beings which are free, rational, and immortal, may be gods in due time, thro' divine grace, if they please.

How deplorable our distance from it! Whence this unmanly defect? Know we not, that, unless our conduct is that of a man, it had been better for us if in a lower species had fallen our lot? Why were we called into being? What we have enjoyed already, poorly pays our mother's pain and our own. Wouldst thou repeat thy part in the comedy? act it over again? Wouldst thou be rejumbled in this rough Thespian cart; dragg'd on by those two skeletons, half-starved Hope, and panting Expectation, through bad roads, now worse and worse, and thy fellow-strollers in a constant conspiracy against both thy pay and thy

applause, how well soever thy part is performed, how great soever thy indulgence is to them?—Thou wouldst not. Here and there, indeed, we might pick up a lucky hour, *alboque notanda lapillo*, that might make us smile again. But nature, and indeed reason, starts back at the whole. If we should find a small pearl in one oyster of a million, it would hardly make us fishers for life.

Wouldst thou, then, cease to be?—No; nature shudders at it. That horn of the alternative wounds more than the former: if so, our wishes as well as our nature push us into eternity. And shall we fear what we wish? Fear it we must, unless we provide a good reception there. We have provided for to-morrow, and to-morrow was not satisfied. If we provide for eternity, our satisfaction will be full. We have provided for many years; for more than we shall ever see; but not for those which will never end.

How great the dishonour, my dear fellow-criminal! in us, who were not blind to the grand futurity, were not cold to the divine rewards, to let the glowing thoughts of immortality so far mingle with the dregs of sense! Is not this, with the wings of an eagle, to drop into the mire? There lies the pleasure of which the world is so fond; that bane of private property, that presage of public slavery, that sure annihilation of a rational creature, and as sure a creation of a wretch eternal. Pleasure has robbed earth of more lives, and heaven of more souls, than the body-collective of all other evils discharging their whole quivers on man.

Our weakness, and our security under the consequences of it, is no uncommon case. Blushing, I look round for its fatal cause. And do I not find it, where, if found, it must increase my confusion? Do I not find it in the great goodness of God? If so,

how must that reproach and brand the deep ingratitude of man? And, I think, I find it there.

The General CAUSE of Security in SIN.

FOR, consider, my good friend! what can he do that ventures to continue in sin? He cannot defy the wrath divine; that is not in man. He cannot acquiesce under the terror of its consequence. He must therefore presume on divine mercy. "I know myself worthless, yet earth pours its blessings. I know myself worthless, yet Heaven buys me with its blood. What is to be feared, what is not to be hoped, from such a GOD? Be my crimes what they will, some yet unrevealed expedient will be found for my safety. For *God is love*." Thus, possibly, he may reason; and thus, at once, do two strange things: cite Scripture to his ruin, and make the mercies of God fatal to man.

God, indeed, is love: but shall man therefore be a monster? and a monster in the judgment of all men? All confess, that there is an admirable consent between the precepts of virtue and the sentiments of our common reason. All confess that virtue receives a constant approbation from the uniform verdict of our consciences. All confess, that virtue practised, brings in the greatest happiness to society. He, therefore, that is not virtuous, can give himself no satisfactory account, why he was born either with reason, or conscience, or a desire of happiness; since he has nothing of what they all demand from him: And, therefore, he must appear an unaccountable being; that is, a monster, not only to others but himself.

This is more than enough to make vice our aversion, though GOD were love to that absurd degree which our folly may fancy, and which our vice most cer-

tainly wishes and wants. But there is no such love in him: it is blasphemous to suppose it. God is love; and therefore—what? That which many may least expect—therefore God is terrible. From whence arises his marvellous love to man? Of man he has no need; the divine happiness is complete: in man he sees no merit; he knows we are worthless, as well as we ourselves: but then, far better than we, he knows that we are—immortal: that therefore (most interesting and most alarming thought!) that therefore we must suffer, or enjoy, for ever.

Hence, be most assured, my friend! his regard for man. Hence, for a worm, to-day crawling out of the earth; and to-morrow, more despicably still, crawling into corruption; his compassion, his solicitude, his counsels held on high; and all the wonders of his love. Wonders?—much more than wonders to man; they are wonders in heaven! They strike with amazement the first angels of light.

Conscious of thy own meanness, canst thou scarce believe that divine indulgence should thus abound? Consider: GOD, indeed, called us out of the dust: but he called us into an eternity; an eternity, henceforward, commensurate with his own: And shall not his concern be commensurate in degree, bear a proportion to his gift? Shall not one shew as much of the great GOD as the other? As he has made us immortal, he has made us also endangered creatures; creatures that must, necessarily, stand the most important and incomprehensible consequence of their own doubtful conduct for ever. Does not this abate thy surprise at such abundant indulgence? It must, if "GOD is love," and vouchsafes to look on us in the mentioned light. In that light he looks on us! Thence his more than paternal bowels of compassion for the most unworthy of men; thence his omnipotence exerted in giving proofs of his love.

But why (sayest thou) is this love terrible? Is not

that love most terrible, which tells us we are in danger of being eternally undone? And this love tells us so; for (as I conceive) it never had existed, had not that been our case.

How deep, then, and deplorable, is their mistake, who presume to sin, because God is so good; when God is so good purely because he knows that presumption will be their ruin! who presume on impunity for sin, because God is so good; when God is so good, purely because he knows that sin and impunity are incompatible! Such men make a demonstration of their danger, the basis of their security; and fear nothing, because an Omnipotence, that is solicitous for their welfare, gives proof that he is apprehensive of their destruction.

Such men reason ill. Still worse, experience cannot convince them. What their experience of every day, every hour proves to be true, they will not believe: they doubt, if they shall be (not to use a harsher word) condemned for their sins. Yet they know that they shall die. Now, as I take it, their death is a prelude, and assurance, of their future condemnation: for, if beings, originally immortal, die for another's sin, can it be doubted but that they shall be condemned for their own? And that death (which is a demonstration that sin shall not escape unpunished) is unavoidable, they are convinced by their senses: unless our Centaurs, therefore, lay aside their senses, as well as their reason, for the future they must forego vain hopes, too frequent, and too sanguine, among them; nor longer turn a proof of immortality into a presumption on impunity, Heaven's indulgence into destruction, and gather poison from the tree of life.

I know not, my friend! if others have urged these arguments, with regard to the cause of God's great indulgence to man, and the certainty of punishment for sin; but to me they appear of a very weighty and

affecting nature. There are some truths of the last moment to men, which, at first aspect, have somewhat surprising in them: they require, and well deserve, our second thoughts.

I will give you two; one from scripture, one from my own thoughts: "With the LORD there is mercy, therefore shall he be feared."—"With man there is immortality, therefore shall he tremble."--- Tremble at himself! tremble at his own power, which can give what colour he will to a whole eternity: tremble at his own glory; that he has angels for his guard, and an Almighty for his friend: yes, tremble at all that might incline him to triumph: for these grandeurs, that inspire presumption, increase danger; are magnificent assurances that he may be plunged beyond hope, be lost past retrieve.

GOD, indeed, forbids our despair: but not because his love will save us in our sins; but because despair stops all effort at amendment; and without it his love desires our welfare in vain. His love is such, as to give us encouragement, and support, in every thing but sin; such as to support our spirits amidst the ruins of a falling world; but not under the cloud of one unrepented guilt.

This flings light on a part of scripture, which has a cloud on it in some eyes, and with others quite ruins its credit: "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling:" A strange text to those, who fear and tremble at nothing so much as at a disappointment in their lusts. Our salvation must be worked out. Wishing, and willing, will not bring it; hoping, and confiding, will not procure it: it will not come by chance; no, nor by gift, and infusion. It must be worked out with fear, because fear is the strongest guard of diligence, without which this work cannot go on; and with trembling, lest we should fail in this important work, lest we should think too lightly of the divine justice, and lest our very confidence should

THOUGHTS FOR AGE. 111

betray us even though we were good men; for good men have failed purely from a good opinion of their own state. For a good opinion begets security; security begets negligence; and negligence, temptation; and temptation, a fall; and (if unrepented) a fall into that state, where our first wish will be, that we never had been born; and (worse still!) where there is no last. Pain is sometimes so great, even here, that we lose our senses: there it will be far greater; and (how terrible to say!) our senses will not be lost.

T H O U G H T S for A G E.

ON the bank of that state we, now, stand: that post of wisdom, if ever men are wise; which is the reason why they wish it may be long before they arrive at it: for folly is the favourite of mankind; and is it not our own? Though there we stand, we scarce believe it; so much our wishes obstruct our belief: or, believing, scarce know what being there means; so much familiarity takes away our attention, and robs things of their power to strike strong on our minds. Eternity has so often passed our lips, that it has forgot its way to our hearts. Did it enter there, would it not extinguish every earthborn passion in them? Yes; as the sun the smallest spark of fire.

Though we stand on its awful brink, such our leaden bias to the world, we turn our faces the wrong way; we are still looking on our old acquaintance, Time; though now so wasted and reduced, that we can see little more of him than his wings and his scythe: our age enlarges his wings to our imagination; and our fear of death, his scythe; as Time himself grows less. His consumption is deep: his annihilation is at hand.

Should we not then turn us round, and look on eternity? that glorious home of all that survives, and outshines the sun; that kingdom of souls immortal! Of immortal souls, Time is only the maturing womb: from eternity they wait their real birth. Are we, my friend! matured? or shall we prove abortive to the world of glory? If we were mature, why tarry here so long? By protracting life, Heaven shews not its favour to those that are fit to die. Is not the business of our day undone, the cause why we are suffered to sit up so late? to be so long on our weary legs, after the common hour of human rest? I fear it is. I much fear we are permitted to live, purely because—we do not deserve it.

Is it not (my languid fellow-traveller in the deep vale of years!) high time to be wiser? lest the greatest of curses should fall on us, that of being wise too late; which is the most emphatical definition of a fool. The world is worn out to us; and we are worn out to the world. The world, which knows its own interest, quits us, as rats a ruined house; if we knew ours, should we not quit the world, as bees an exhausted flower? We can make no more honey of it; its sweets are gone. Where are its formerly sweet delusions, its airy castles, and glittering spires? Are we not left on a lonely, barren, briery heath, to grope out our weary way, through the dusk of life, to our final home? Shall not the dissolved enchantment set the captive free? Are we Torrismonds or Sudburys? Shall our dotage rivet our chains, when kind Nature would knock them off? To speak a language even Centaurs may understand, "A last card, well play'd, may yet win the game."

Consider; are we scheming still? stretching out a trembling hand, which wants to be supported, to grasp at the nothing that comes next? Any thing now gain'd would rather mock, than enrich us; can any thing enrich, that cannot be enjoyed? Grasp at

new faculties, and new powers, if thou canst find them, or new objects will only laugh us to scorn. But hadst thou even those, if the value of things is in proportion to our term in them, their price at our market should fall very low.

It is a good thing to know when we have all, and to laugh at that cheat *more*, which is ever stealing our hearts. But it is as uncommon as good. Hence, seniors are milking the world after it is dry. Is it not a shame that we should be gleaning sublunary straws, when our harvest of life is over? hoping an after-crop in our stubble? though called to diadems, where harvest is perpetual; where an harvest, more than golden, profusely crowns an eternal year?

As to the pass which is so much feared; the dark subterranean entry to future life; into which our weak imagination peeps, and starts back as a child at a shadow; all thanks to the blessed Gospel, we know what will light us up a lamp in it, and lessen its formidable gloom. I have seen a deathbed, the reverse of poor Altamont's, where the bystanders were the greatest sufferers; and the king of terrors, by Christian patience, was overmatched. The power of religion shone out without a veil; nor could any rising suspicions of hypocrisy dim its lustre. In such scenes as these the human heart is no longer visible to man; and a glimpse of heaven is discovered in such a sight.

We know what can make us sleep sweetly in the dust: what can smoothe the rough transition; soften death into a sort of translation, which interrupts not (blessed be God!) our existence, nor our peace. In peace have many died; and, therefore, it is certain, all may. The whole secret for obtaining that peace, is an absolute resignation to the Most High; which (as hard a task as it seems to some) at the bottom it is no more than owning him to be God. And a contrary conduct (as little as it is considered) has

Atheism, partial Atheism, in it. It is questioning some of his attributes, though not denying a God. May that peace be thine! My heart beats with ardour for thy present peace and future bliss. May I share it with thee! What a poor broken embrace, what a sad fragment of friendship is that which ends at the grave! Such a transitory tie gives a second dart to death, and a double dissolution to departing man; that of soul and body scarce more severe.

Would to heaven, that all friendships were evidently friendships of immortal men; such, I mean, as gave proof of their having each others eternal interests at heart. Modern, at least fashionable, friendship flows from a polluted source: it tastes too strong of earth; without the least tincture of Man (as above described;) without the least spirit of immortality in it: nay, worse; it often springs from causes that will not bear the light; and resembles the dark streams of Alpheus and Arethusa, that mingle under ground. It should rather resemble Eridanus, which is said to flow from heaven.

How many have we of these subterranean attachments? What is it ties our Centaurs together in so long a string:—Leaping together the same barriers of the decent, and the just; ranging the same forbidden grounds; gorging at the same manger; neighing the same inflammatory tone; or being daily rid, and sorely galled, by the domineering insolence of the same inflamed mistress.

Since such their accomplishments, I hope to levy a Lapithean infantry sufficient successfully to carry on the war now opened against them.—As Chiron blew the trumpet which called the Greeks to the siege of Troy; I hear there is a modern Chiron, who sounds as many instruments, as Nebuchannezzar did to summon his idolaters; and that he raises forces, and ceases not to carry on the war at a vast expence.

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Doubtless he was typified of old by him who is said in Virgil,

“Ære ciere viros, martemque accendere cantu.”

For my own part, my friend! I fancy my campaign will soon be over. I have frequent pains: and, I think, I hear the Master's call. If so, should we not leave this world, though not yet admitted of the next? Have we not been, thro' life, anxiously providing one year for the next? And shall we grudge to pay half that pains for an eternity?

Consider, my immortal friend! should we not leave the world, before the world leave us? It is dismal to be left. There is a noble absence from earth, while we are yet on it: there is a noble intimacy with Heaven, while we are yet beneath it. If our affection flies thither, we shall be welcomed by superior beings; and not be missed by men, who delight in novelties; or, if missed, admired the more for being once in the right. They must be somewhat out of this world, who would be deep in the concerns of the next; and is it not time we should be so? Till the business of life (as it is called) is over, its real business is rarely begun: nor always then. Age is apt to carry its allowed title to repose too far: age is the most busy period of human life: but its transactions are not with men; therefore that absence above mentioned is most fit for it. It is a sort of a third state between this world and the next. How proper then for the reception of those whose term is out here, according to the common age of man!

And can it be hard for us to lay this world aside, since they that have fared best in the world, have only the fewest objections against it? Is it not an old tragi-comedy read over and over, which by no means

“Decies repetita placebit.”

Juv.

To speak in the licentious style of comedy, Man is a mule, of mixed origin, of heaven and earth: earth has had more than its share of us; give heaven the rest; and that for a double reason. All know that Hope is life's cordial: it works miracles; without happiness it makes men happy. What have been all the pleasures of our former years, but joyous prophecies and bold promises in the name of to-morrow? Worldly hope in age expires. If he provides not another hope, a man of years and a man of misery mean the same thing. Therefore the same steps are to be taken, whether we would sweeten the remaining dreg of life, or provide a triumph for eternity.

The worldly wishes, which an old man sends out, are like Noah's dove; they cannot find whereon to light, and must return to his own heart again for rest. His natural, and perhaps most allowable and proper, wish, is for respect. But respect for age is a virtue. I need say no more to convince him how little of it he must expect: and, indeed, he but ill deserves it from others, who, by doating on the world, denies it to himself.

When infirmity drives the world from us, or disease confines us to our chamber, should we not be all alone with the great Father of spirits and Searcher of hearts? Is it not worth while a little beforehand to practise our lesson, that we may be the better prepared to sustain such an interview? Our wisdom cannot add to the days, but it can lighten the burden, of life, and lessen the terrors of death. Death forgot in youth, is folly; in age, madness. With regard to that king of terrors, how many in years borrow the security of youth! for it is impossible it should belong to them. Happy they! whom death, when he comes, shall find at home; his visit will have less of terror in it. Out of pure decency to the dignity of human nature, of which the decays and imperfections should not be exposed, men in years, by recets,

should fling a veil over them, and to the world be a little buried before they are interred. An old man's too great familiarity with the public is an indignity to the human nature, and a neglect of the divine. A greater intercourse with it than the calls of duty and virtue demand, is indecent, irreligious, and contemptible; speaking acquiescence in contempt, dotage on the world, and oblivion of eternity. His fancying himself to be still properly one of this world, and on a common foot with the rest of mankind, is, as if a man getting drunk in the morning, after a long nap, lifting his drowsy lids at sunset, should take it for break of day.

But grant him to be still of this world; grant him all it can give: What is this world, but a machine played on us by our great enemy for the dissipation of human thought, whose scattered rays must be collected, as it were, to a focal point, in order duly to warm our devotion, and set a pious heart on fire? And can any happiness subsist in age without piety? Impossible! Its intimacy with the world is not for the pleasures it can give; they are past: it is purely to dislodge the thoughts of death, which intrude at that season; that is, it is purely to decline the pleasures of heaven.

Why, my friend! is our day of trial extended beyond the expiration of the common term? Is it not indulged to the great need our past conduct has of it? And shall our folly reverse the kind intention of that divine indulgence to us? Shall it set us farther from our God? I am never so strongly struck with the weakness and depravity of man, as when I see grey hairs playing the fool. Hope, which in other evil appearances supports our spirits, fails us there. What can shock common sense, what can create amazement, if not the failings that would dishonour youth, in those that are miraculously alive after the stated period of human life? This is an outrage to reason, be-

yond the boldness of the desperado that confounds us most: this outdares the felon repeating his crime, not only under the gallows, but with the cord about his neck. Where is that world into which you and I were born? It is under ground; and a generation of strangers are dancing over our coevals, long since in the dust. Where is that world into which we shall be borne? Far, far above the sun, if while we are beneath it we behave ourselves like men. But if this life was our only concern, consider, that nothing but being wiser, that is, better, than those born after us, can possibly rescue the decays of age from aversion and contempt.

Fain would I have my pen of some service to the aged, now my nearest relations, those of blood, are no more. To the former am I related by like date, duty, interest, concern; and, above all,

—“Nunc ipsa pericula jungent.”

OVID.

Still eager in worldly pursuits, warm in the chace of shadows, shall we rush, as down a precipice, and leap plumb into the jaws of extempore death?

No, let us halt in our career; pause on the brink, and provide for our eternal peace. Can I better express my love than by pressing it on thee? I press it strongly. And know, my friend! that Heaven, and (as I have shewed thee) a most indulgent Heaven, joins my pathetic wish; and angels, ardent angels, say Amen. And what want they? (mark it well), they want nothing but thy own concurrence to crown their wishes for thy welfare.

Dear Sir,

Yours.

LETTER VI.

The DIGNITY of MAN.

The CENTAUR's Restoration to
HUMANITY.

The DIGNITY of MAN resumed.

The CONCLUSION.

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L E T T E R VI.

The DIGNITY of MAN.

HERE, Sir, I enter on that elevated theme, The Dignity of Man.

“ Major rerum nihil nascitur ordo.

VIRG.

I shall scale the summit of human nature, and set its dignity in the strongest light; that the contrast may strike our Centaurs with a just sense of their own ghastly condition, and more clearly demonstrate the depth of their fall. Many are for degrading their nature, that they may lessen its duties; and for looking on themselves as beings insignificant, that they may be profligate beings with a better grace, and (as they would flatter themselves) with more excuse. They run voluntarily into this error, as men into the dark, that they may sin without a blush; framing a lie (which is the common case) for their apology. Their master Epicurus meant much the same, by setting the gods at such a distance; and, for their repose, exempting them from the trouble of inspecting the trifles of men. A due sense of the grandeur of man's nature and destination, is his best bulwark against the frequent and violent assaults temptation makes on him. This is a subject which I wish had been taken into better hands: for, as it demands all the powers of the noblest pen to reach its heights, so the world stands in need of having this, above all other, pressed home on their hearts; for all other of any great moment are implied in it. There are but few whose opinions do not too much widen the distance between an angel and a man. I

shall bring them nearer together, as the best means for the reformation of Centaurs (as you shall see), and for the most noble exaltation of men.

I have just now observed, that—"Angels want nothing but thy own concurrence to crown their wishes for thy welfare."—This is true: shall I not then be pardoned, if I presume to put the same meaning into somewhat an higher style, and say (with all reverence) that Heaven's desires are at thy mercy?—If so, think, and think again, what art thou? Thou poor, feeble, earth-born mortal! what art thou?—Darts not on thee a stream of heavenly light? Dost thou not see an amazing majesty in man? Have I not, then, made my bold promise good? Did I not, above, tell thee, I would surprise thee with thyself?

Nor can I rest here. I man is almost more than man can conceive; a marvellous being that rises above himself, darting rays of glory beyond the reach of his own sight. My heart is tied to this endearing, transporting, and triumphant theme.

Is thy consent necessary to finish what is begun, or rather only designed, above? How strangely this sounds! Yet must I proceed in a still higher strain.—In thee it is, (how seemingly bold and impious so to speak) yes, it is, in thee, to grant, or deny, the request of the Almighty.—And impious, indeed, it would be, if unauthorised by scripture, in which that request is made.

A requesting Omnipotence!—What can stun and confound thy reason more? What more can ravish and exalt thy heart? It can't but ravish and exalt, it can't but gloriously disturb and perplex thee, to take in all that thought suggests. Thou child of the dust! thou speck of misery and sin! how abject thy weakness! how great is thy power! Thou crawler on earth, and possible (I was about to say) controulér of the skies!

Weigh, and weigh well, the wondrous truths I have in view: which cannot be weighed too much; which, the more they are weighed, amaze the more; which to have supposed, before they were revealed, would have been as great madness, and to have presumed on, as great sin, as it is now madness and sin not to believe. Such precious and beatifying news is brought us by revelation; that revelation which is rejected, and despised, by those that affect to be thought wiser, and happier, than the rest of mankind.

The truths I mean, are implied in what follows; *viz.* Heaven intends, desires, labours, works miracles, or more (if more can be,) for thy welfare: it presses thee, it importunately presses thee, to comply. Consider; how thou art courted? and by whom? By Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; thy fellow-labourers for thy good. How is thy alliance sought? and at what a price? Angels, inspecting, admiring angels, cannot compute its value. An extreme of love, an extreme of glory, this, which those angels (if angels could envy) might envy to man; for was it not denied to them?

Thou younger, but darling, son of heaven! wonder; tremble; triumph!—Yes, triumph; tremble; wonder! Thy greatest emotion falls short of the mighty cause. Thou greatly beloved, greatly favoured, greatly destined, and, oh! greatly endangered! take heed to thy steps; nor less take fire at thy prize.

Art thou more exalted, or terrified, at what I say? Exultation, and fear, both rise in extremes.—With both passions comply; highly reverence thy own nature; more profoundly adore the divine. Adore it with voice, heart, and life: and thus, to glad all heaven, assert, rescue, ennoble, and with bliss eternal crown thyself: for without thee, in the constituted order of things, Heaven is unable to do it. Its al-

mighty hand is, as it were, tied up by its own decree. Without thee, thou amazing being! (pardoned be the word so bold) there is impotence in heaven. Nor is it bold when explained; for impotence, when voluntary, is no impeachment of power.

Is all this rapturous!—Yes, such a rapture, as nothing but gross ignorance, or more fatal infidelity, can forbear. Is not rapture due for felicities inexpressible? And what felicity is so much as second to this? It is the close, frequent, and feeling inspection of these *interiora* of man's sublime condition, as immortal and redeemed, that is the highest cordial of human joy, and the richest mine of human thought. A mine deep-dug by few! and yet, without it, man is not more a stranger to the natives of Saturn than to himself. Without it, he must want the true, genuine, vital spirit of a Christian. None without it can be filled with the light and comfort of the Holy Ghost. This, O ye Methodists! gives the real new birth: this enters man in quite another world. In his former world all things are absolutely changed; well nigh annihilated as to his wonted passion for them.

“The heavens declare the glory of the LORD, and the firmament sheweth his handy-work.” But the Christian mine I have mentioned, infinitely more demands our adoration and praise; infinitely more demands our exultation and joy. Are we transported, and justly transported, at the wonderful operations of nature? and decline we the contemplation of greater wonders in ourselves? and when the former but amuses an hour, the last blesses an eternity? In those stupendous views it is, that the mercy of God, and glory of man, at highest shine. Hence it is, that constant joy is enjoined to Christians as an absolute duty: a duty, on weaker motives, as absolutely impracticable.

You see, Sir, that to dive deep into man, is to dive into an ocean of love divine: which first drowns us in amazement; then lifts us into triumph; and, at length, lands us (if we are wise) on eternal life. But too many swim only on the surface of our nature; like a feather, thro' their levity, incapable of sinking to those solid and shining advantages, those pearls of great price; those great, awakening, and strongly stimulating, motives to virtue, that ly below. But I shall resume this subject before I close. What is already said is enough to produce that good effect which you will find in the marvellous scene which, very soon, will open to you.

The CENTAUR'S RESTORATION to HUMANITY.

AT present, my friend! we must quit this consecrated, for enchanted ground; as you will soon, to your surprise and disgust, perceive. I know it is not to your taste; nor, indeed, to my own: but levity has its use, when perverse patients will refuse what is salutary, if conveyed in any vehicle less agreeable to their vitiated taste; and the grave reader, who nauseates it, sacrifices (through too great delicacy) to mere appearances the substance of what is right.

Thou knowest that our Centaurs can scarce be persuaded that they are not still human creatures; tho' *mechantur, scortantur, adulterantur, diabolantur* (I am forced to make words that are bad enough for them;) and not so much as retain

—"Veteris vestigia formæ."

OVID.

Are they not (to speak with reverence in the language of the prophet) as "fed horses in the morn-

ing?" Do they not assemble by troops in ladies houses? It is harlots in the original; and so by us translated. But that is not their only objection to the scriptures. Perhaps an old Arabian proverb may have greater authority with them. What says it?

"Let him that would be safe, avoid seven things;
 "wasps, spiders, hyenas, crocodiles, efts, adders,
 "and fine women."

Here, then, I shall begin my exorcism. Its words must be strange and barbarous, suited to the occasion. Let not your ear, my friend, be shocked; but listen, and wait the event.

"May Lais, Thais, Limax, Lupa, Succuba, Quadrantaria, Obolaria, Euriole, Sthenio, Medusa, Erinnyes, Megæra, and Typhphone—May all these, and all such ladies, whether sick or sound, high or low, of blood and title, or ditch and dunghill; natives, foreign, or infernal—May this glorious group of Torrismond's angels, these gorgons, furies, harpies, leaches, syrens, centaur-making syrens! paid or unpaid, keeping or kept, on fire or quench'd; geneva'd or citron'd, in closet or cellar, in tavern, bagnio, brothel, round-house, Bridewell, or Newgate—Oh! may they cease, from this hour, to sing or dance, smile or frown, please or plague, pray or swear, our British unbritish youth, manhood, and age, out of their senses, health, estates, reputation, human nature, and hopes of heaven!

"And, these enchantresses laying aside their spells, may the bewitched of Great Britain recover their pristine form, as Circe's herd at the prayer of Ulysses. At the touch of my disinchanting pen, may they leap out of their hides for joy; and laying hold on their long deserted definition of man, reason and two legs, walk uprightly for the future."

Rejoice with me, my friend! For do I dream? or didst thou not observe? didst thou not hear?—*Intonus*

Izoum. As the dark cloud which caused it is vanished, and a flood of light rushes in; so shall it fare with them. I see their dawning reason; I see the break of their moral day. And what I see I shall relate; and what I relate, though strange, let no man disbelieve.

The Centaurs that can read, on perusal of the Dignity of Man, are stung as the Trojan horse, when Laocoon's spear pierced his side; and groan as deeply as that, when

“ Insonuere cavæ, gemitumque dedere cavernæ.” VIRG.

Most of them are much affected, but differently; being, at last, fully convinced that they are not men. One burns his Bolingbroke; another an indecent song: this calls in his bills, pleading privilege no more: that bespeaks a pew against the next quarter: a third blames his delay; swears he will pray directly; falls on his knees, like Cæsar's horse;—rises again with a sigh, and solemn vow, that he will be master of his Pater-noster before to-morrow: a fourth subscribes all his gains by false dice to the Foundling Hospital: a fifth orders two little boys to school immediately, and sends ten guineas to their mothers in Bridewell: a sixth, in a flame of pious zeal, damns a senseless world; and undertakes, in less than a week, to demonstrate that adultery is a crime. A seventh, &c.

But I must not triumph too much. I have not had equal success with the female Centaurs. From a natural constancy of temper, and habitual aversion to change, they come but slowly into my wishes. But, to make amends, when they come, they come with a vengeance, and overshoot the mark. Mr W—ly (whose converts some of them are) tells them, that they stand not upright, unless they lean a little backward; like a crossier, or like themselves when they coyly refuse a salute; thus, though converted, they find not the strait line, but stand still a little bent—to the wrong.

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Besides, of my male converts I have somewhat to complain: for some, though changed at heart, yet awed by fashion, and vain of being still fine men, are ashamed to own it; and appear to be fools, to save their credit. These hypocrites in vice, these moral fops, ridiculously good, may be called little men in Centaurs skins, or coward virtue in masquerade.

And worst of all, of some Centaurs I am quite in despair. They fly my pen, and will not be touched for their distemper; but, being deep stung by worse than the tarantula, run mad for music, and dance themselves to death. Others, with Swift, (in that respect a Centaur himself,) look on the noble quadruped as superior to the man. Others, on the contrary, approve, and heartily wish, a Restoration to Humanity; but are careless and indolent. They would, indeed, if a dæmon was not in possession, they would be good; but will not be at the trouble of bringing a writ of ejectment, tho' Sophronius proffers to draw it up for them. The lowest price of virtue is vigilance and industry; and if it costs us no more, it comes very cheap.

As for those that are truly conscious of their calamity, and heartily desirous of an escape, mark the good effect of the least tendency to goodness; the mighty change, a Restoration of the human figure, is actually begun. But the process is gradual; nature advances, never leaps. They became not Centaurs all at once:

“ Nemo repente fit turpissimus.”

JUV.

As evil habits, which occasioned their transformation, were gradually contracted, it is no wonder that their recovery should prove equally gradual and slow. One sheds a mane; another drops a tail, and appears only as too closely dock'd: some wonder to see slender fingers sprouting thro' hoofs, by their penitential tears mollified into flesh: some, like dancing dogs,

continue upright some time; but, tired of that unnatural restraint, drop into Centaurs for life: so dangerous, in moral distempers as well as natural, is a relapse. Some quite restored, yet still retain so much of their former nature, that they are apt to trip, if a strong temptation, like a stone or cart-rut, lyes across their way: some can scarce believe their good fortune, and fear it as a dream: others, too sanguine, cry out, Brother! to the first man they see; who starts at his new relation, with a hide still sticking at his heels.

What a loud call do I hear among them for things strange and new! for dresses suited to the human shape; for pleasures suited to the human mind; for bibles, prayer-books, debt-books; for virtuous comforts, faithful friends, and fit objects of charity; for rational improvement and employments! no longer for new-market trappings, but for human ornaments! This, however, where the restoration is complete. Poor Sudbury is still awkwardly hopping on three legs; while others stand firmly planted on half four: one of whom, more learned than the rest, cries out;

ΠΛΙΟΝ ΗΜΙΟΥ ΠΑΝΤΟΣ.

HES.

The rest naturally take it for a pious thanksgiving, and give a loud *Amen*.

They that are quite recovered, arrayed in decent plain apparel, not dappled as the morning, with embroidery, or with lace all over lifted like the beautiful Indian as, call a council; and their first manly resolution is to proclaim peace with the Lapithæ, or men of virtue; with whom, from time immemorial, the Centaurs have been at war. Chiron bent his bow against them; but of war various has been the fortune between them. Till within this last half century, the Centaurs increasing both in numbers and boldness, wearing frontlets of brass on their fore-

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heads, and Horace's *as triplex* on their breasts; and having of late a mighty giant at their head, whose quills, more fatal than the porcupine's, threatened a thousand deaths at once, they began to dream of nothing less than victory complete. But the present reinforcement of their enemies will turn the scale against them. I say reinforcement; for the next step my converts take is to list into the Lapiſſean ſervice, determined to meet their late friends in no friendly ſort, under a banner with this motto,

“ Quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo, et omnis in hoc ſum.”

Which promiſes victory; for they are very formidable foes, who have had the fortitude firſt to conquer themſelves.

At the news of their revolt, offended Torriſmond, burning for revenge, cries, Ha, ha! ſnuſſs the battle from afar,

“ Colleſtumque premens volvit ſub naribus ignem.” VIRG.

The glory of his noſtrils is terrible. And ſtill more abundantly his heroic choler riſes on hearing that their firſt deſtined enterpriſe is againſt Bolingbroke-caſtle, that delight of his eyes, and defiance of his foes; for he deems it impregnable, becauſe it is moted round with Acheron, and its aſpiring proud battlements threaten Heaven.

This caſtle was built out of the various ruins of many demolished forts of infidelity, pompouſly put together, faced over with a material more ſhining than ſolid, and cemented with untempered mortar. Sophronius † heads the laudable enterpriſe. The caſtle is taken as was ancient Babylon. He firſt turns the general ſtream of the nation, by the force of ſtrong and ſolid eloquence, into a new channel, as Cyrus did the river Euphrates; then entering the caſtle, and finding the gariſon turning things ſacred

† An excellent author in this controverſy, now in the preſs.

to prophane use, and drowned in debauch, obtains a sudden and complete victory ; but is a most merciful conqueror : for, instead of putting any to death, he only puts the most sensible of them out of countenance ; and to their own darling delights, and boasted glories, instead of the gallies, condemns them for life ; obliging them, however, in acknowledgment of his clemency, to wear yellow cockades, impressed with these words, *Be thou a Centaur still !* The bad man's choice includes his punishment.

The same Sophronius, adorned with his well deserved mural crown, rescues the character of a late pious and learned prelate, which the Centaurs boasted Achilles (who

“ Jura negat sibi nata, nihil non arrogat,)” HOR.

had dragged, like Hector's body, round the town in the dirt. For the glory of Britain, and for the light and emulation of posterity, I see it inscribed on a column of adamant, with a Bolingbroke couchant embossed on the base ; who now contributes to support (as much as such a feeble Atlas can) that celestial character which he lately laboured to destroy ; proud of his uncircumcised reason ; which reason, notwithstanding, had evidently lost its authority with himself : for when that is preserved, sense submits to reason ; and when sense submits to reason, reason submits to the revealed word of God. And (since some are in love with words) I must observe, that reason stooped to revelation, is reason still ; only reason more reasonable ; and its great hazard of error is all that it has lost.

And now, my friend ! what shall I say on this happy revolution ? Shall I not out-boast Augustus ? He said of Rome, *Latericeam inveni, marmoream reliqui.* I, of London, *Inveni equinam, reliqui humanam.*

Nothing remains, but to cleanse the now deserted stables, and to render them fit for human use ; and

to persuade the she-grooms, who kept them, into some more decent and less diabolical course of life; especially my patroness, who, for the honour (as she calls it) of my dedication, has promised to give into my superstition, and to play fair, at least on Sundays, and learn her catechism when the masquerades for the season are over; which, out of an unfurmountable regard for the first, and most amorous, and most musical son, Chiron, she confesses ingeniously she cannot forbear. For ladies love a Centaur still.

The DIGNITY of MAN resumed.

IT is high time, my friend! to quit this fairy-land, of which I know you are heartily tired; and to perform my promise in resuming the Dignity of Man: a theme which my heart affects; and which your conduct, in some measure, inspires. And who can think of it unimproved? He who thinks of his dignity, necessarily thinks of his God: and he who values his dignity, as necessarily worships and obeys him. In a due sense, therefore, of human dignity, our endangered virtue finds her most powerful guard.

Think you that I have carried the dignity of man too high? Spare the sacred page. "There, one of Adam's seed converses face to face with his Creator. Another is called his friend. He who made the worlds delights to be called the son of a third. He who made the worlds even died for the meanest of men. The meanest of men has it within his power to be an heir of the most mighty God, and a joint heir with the most blessed Jesus." Absolves not this the boldest stroke of my pen? what can raise our self-estimation so high, what can aggrandise human nature so much, as this?

In Heaven's great and constant effort for our welfare, is capitally written the dignity of man. That is a key to the moral world, and opens and explains the reason of all God's otherwise mysterious conduct in it; every step of which is evidently calculated for man's present or future felicity, or both. The long shining series, the golden chain, of all God's marvellous acts, from the beginning to the close of time, speaks his uninterrupted regard for human nature; and what can more loudly proclaim human dignity than this? O let it not be said, that man's dignity is declared by all things but the manners of man!

As distant as they may be thought by the thoughtless, heaven and earth are so near together, so shot (as it were) into one another, that good men are truly "foreigners on earth; have their conversation in heaven; are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." To speak allusively to the patriarchial vision, good men are angels; only as yet at the bottom of the ladder; and some angels are only men made perfect, at the top of it. As a man from an embryo, so differs an angel from a man; what one is, the other soon shall be. Since this is the case, (and a most glorious case it is,) and since by such multitudes it is either not considered, or not known;

"O fortunati nimium, bona si sua norunt!" VIRG.

would be no needless memorandum, or improper motto, for all mankind.

But you still have your objection on the whole—"Will not raising so high, and dwelling so long on, the dignity of man, occasion pride?" No; on the reverse, a due sense of it will necessitate humility. Pride springs from a conceit which an individual has of his superiority over some others of the same species. The dignity I speak of is equally the dignity of all men; and what levels, cannot exalt. It will

necessitate humility; because, without that, it cannot preserve itself; our native dignity will die in the result. As for that dignity which occasions your objection, we have, I confess, too much of it. We have in abundance what may be called lunar great men: men in themselves opaque, who borrow beams from their circumstances or situation; which beams they shew, like the moon, by night; I mean, when ignorance prevails; then the darkened understandings of their admirers give them leave to shine.

These lunar grandees have generally many little surrounding satellites, that help, by their adulations, to gild their opacity. But of such great men, who are forced to assume, (as men must plunder who would be gainers where nothing is due), it must be said, that the greatest of them would be greater still, if they would only please to be a little less.

They only have solar or self-born light, who live up to the dignity of their nature. Their light is not only their own, and illustrious; but inextinguishable, and eternal. These, as they are the greatest, are also the most humble, of mankind. For they well know, that our grandeur is to be looked for in the love of God, not in the merit of man. And therefore they set it down as a maxim, (and a maxim most true and useful it is), "No man ever thought too highly of his nature, or too meanly of himself."

Here would I cease. But how hard to get loose from this ever-teeming, all-important, and inexhaustible theme! It fills with serene joy the superior region of the soul; and denies entrance to the clouds and storms of worldly perturbation and care. Such the height of its joy, that music and wine leave the raised hearts of our sons of delight far far below. And yet how is this glorious subject, in most minds, by the love of the world, close compress'd, and folded up, as an oak in an acorn, or a man in the womb! To develope, and expand it, how great my desire!

In which of its thousand shining lights shall I set it, for our final contemplation of its mighty moment to man?

Man is the most noble study of man. Let him circle the globe, let him traverse the skies; and then, for something more worthy his notice and admiration, return to himself. To himself he is a theatre immense: and was reputed such, when that theatre had much less to exhibit than at present it can boast, and when it was but faintly illuminated with the glimmering beams of far more noble lights. The so renowned *Know thyself*, was nothing but a precept enjoining a close inspection and survey of this theatre; yet that precept, as to its author, was held divine; and as to its practice, the supreme wisdom of man. That precept is now exalted into an awful command from Heaven; and that theatre is consecrated into a venerable temple, a temple of the Holy Spirit.

As in some pieces of perspective, by the pressure of the eye, so in this temple, by the pressure or perseverance of thought, the magnificent prospect is opened and aggrandized still more and more; and, opening, discovers the full dignity of man. In what does that consist? in the marvellous things the Almighty has done and designed for him. And if so, this survey gives at once the greatest virtue, and the greatest blessing, of life. For who can see those marvellous things, without an ardent love of God, which is the supreme virtue of man? and who can reflect on such indulgence past, without an absolute trust in such a friend for the future; which of man is the supreme blessing?

But this blessing, and this virtue, this glory and comfort of life, is lost to those to whom this temple is shut. And it is shut to the careless and ignorant; to the slothful and unawakened, in the most illustrious theory of the Christian religion. If therefore such men, in what has been advanced, shall find any thing

like a key to this yet unopened temple; and shall enter its sacred and surprising recesses, and read the wonders of divine love in it; that is, in themselves, in their own condition and prospects; if they shall see and contemplate the three Persons of the Godhead, before creation assuming, and through time's whole length exercising, their separate parts and provinces of philanthropy; and shall behold an innumerable flight of angels for ever on the wing to receive their commands, and speed away, on various dispatches, for the temporal and eternal welfare of man—how should I rejoice! For such a key would be next in value to the key of heaven. It opens the porch, the preliminary scene to it. Therefore have I kept it on the anvil so long; and yet how unfinished at last! May some master-hand accomplish, and multitudes open, the yet absolutely unknown scene of their own nature and blessed destination with it!

And now, my friend, tell me, how must his love of glory fail, how must his ambition creep, who, after the strong inspiration of such a view as this, miserably confines it beneath the sun? Consider this view, and see how high human nature may soar; then look down on the Centaur, and see (if thou canst bear the sight) how low the sons of Heaven may fall! Shall a being whose interests spread so wide as to take in both ends of the creation; shall a being deeply concerned in what was done in the days of Adam, and more deeply still in what shall be done in the great day of consummation; shall such an expansive and far-interested being, with the most sordid and despicable self-denial, and the most inconceivably criminal poverty of spirit, imprison his stifled thought, and nail down his little heart, to the narrow span of this present life? God forbid. If there is the least sense of dignity, or fear of shame; the least spark of man alive, let us consider that we are not only the favourites, but the sons too, of Heaven, and obey in

this our voyage of human life, as Eneas in his from Troy, the Delian oracle,

"Antiquam exquerite matrem."

VIRG.

But our overwhelming shame, and almost incurable misery, is, that we are so carnalized by our lusts, that our heavenly Mother*, in our esteem, has no blessing for us; that a spiritual paradise is no paradise; that it is a paradise we wish lost; one from which we desire to fall; and to wallow, *Epicuri de grege porci*, in our beloved mire. And yet what is this spot of earth which so swallows us up, and in its gulph of obscenities extinguishes our love of heaven? Its enchantment is very short: a few days, a few hours, may make us as wise as Solomon. For, rest assured, earth's rankest idolater, who now, perhaps, in our flourishing school of infidelity, thinks a wiser than Solomon is here, will, at the close of life, in his aching heart, ask Solomon's pardon for not believing him before.

I believe that wise and experienced Prince, whose wisdom and experience was designed to spare future ages their own fatal experience and folly; and closing with his last sentiment, the sum of his divine philosophy, affirm, that many a philosopher may justly be reputed a fool; that as there is but one God, one trial, one great tribunal, one salvation, so there is but one wisdom; that all which, devoid of that, assumes the name, is but folly of different colours and degrees; gay, grave, wealthy, lettered, domestic, political, civil, military, recluse, ostentatious, humble, or triumphant; and is so called in the language of angels, in the sole-authentic and unalterable style of Eternity.

That awful word inspires and awakens ideas that slept before; it points to heaven, and shews me where I fail.—Tho' studious to do justice, I have wronged

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Gal. iv. 16.

my theme: and wronged it much. Somewhat more is wanting to consummate and crown the dignity of man. What have I advanced? "That man is near to the blessed angels!" Is he not more?—Yes, most adorable JESUS! man is more; much more. O whither dost thou call me? whither dost thou transport astonished human thought? I scarce dare look up to the summit of such stupenduous love! Leave I not cherubim and seraphim below? Ye first-born of light! ye thrones! dominions! principalities! and powers! what do I behold? how awed, and how raptured! With what prostration of heart, what elevation of joy, from this remote region, this lowest vale of the creation, this land of darkness and shadow of death, look I up through incumbent clouds of misery and sin, and behold—a Man in heaven! in the highest heaven! in union with the Most High! in union with your most adored and eternal King! and so throned in authority, to you so superior in power, as to make ceaseless intercession for the rest of mankind; not for those whose fall left seats empty in heaven: Oh, aid me with your language, with words more than human, to praise him! that Advocate unwearied for his relations, (proud language!) for his earth-born relations and friends below.

Is not this almost too much for human modesty to mention? for human frailty to credit? for human corruption to admit?—But is it not also far too much for human gratitude to leave unproclaimed, unfounded, unadored? "I go to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God." What heart-subduing, thought-overwhelming, man-exalting words are these! what an amazing, I had almost said levelling, condescension of the Deity! what an amazing, I had almost said what a deifying, sublimation of Man!

O blessed revelation! that opens such wonders. O dreadful revelation! if it opens them in vain. And

are there those with whom they go for nought? Strange men! in possession of a blessing, the bare hopes of which supported the spirits of the wise for four thousand years, under all the calamities of life, and terrors of death; and know they not that it is in their hands? or knowing, cast it away as of no value? A blessing, the very shadow of which made the body of the patriarchal and Jewish religion! a blessing, after which the whole earth panted, as the hart for the water-brooks! a blessing, on which the heavenly host were sent to congratulate mankind, and sing the glad tidings into their transported hearts! a blessing, which was no more than an equivalent for paradise lost! And is this blessing declined, rejected, exploded, despised, ridiculed? Oh unhappy men!—The frailty of man is almost as incomprehensible as the mercies of God.

Who then can inculcate too much the Dignity of Man? for what equally to a due sense of it can inspire a contempt of the world, a fondness for which occasions the madness I deplore? Indeed a due sense of it, evidently, includes the whole of our duty. It inspires high veneration, and great gratitude to God, who gave it; it inspires a reverence for ourselves, which is of utmost moment to our character and peace; and it inspires a proper regard for all mankind, as equal sharers in it: which regard would prevent infinite mischief, and banish half the miseries of life.

This, its universal use, its nature so pregnant of good effects, determined me to the choice of this too much neglected subject: and perhaps, I have now sett in the strongest light; but if not, its importance is such that it should be set in all lights, and from every point that imagination can suggest, and reason authorise, strike, if possible, the degenerate, deeply-sunk, and ever-groveling human heart. He that looks not on man in the light above, or some light similar

and equivalent, knows not himself; is a perfect stranger at home; his heart wanders an exile from his destined felicity; he deprives himself of the powerful impulse which he so much wants, and which Nature denies, and which revelation designed him, for his more vigorous advance in virtue here, and his more sublime ascent in glory hereafter: which two are the whole of his happiness; all the rest is extrinsic, precarious, transient, and inevitably mortal.

And who will dare say, that he who declines, or falls from, the noble and elevating object of contemplation above mentioned, and the glorious hopes it inspires, into the barren field of amusement and trifle, or into the bestial abyss of a few years debauch for his portion; who will dare affirm, that such a wretch differs not as much in reason and happiness from the true Christian, as a quadruped differs in form from a man? It is not form, but manners, which make humanity. The mould in which we are cast, only says what we should be; nothing but our conduct tells us what we are. What wretches are they who contradict their figure, and accuse Nature of having set a wrong stamp on their lying clay! The most despicable and deplorable being under heaven, is a Pagan in a Christian land. He is like a rank growth of poison in paradise: he confines that thought which should set out at the creation, and travel down, with wonder and adoration at every step, thro' the countless mercies and miracles of God, for man, into Nature's final dissolution; and thence launch, for a never-ending voyage, in a blessed eternity,—to the nothing of threescore years; and the wretched means of annihilating that nothing, of contracting that span. Lust exhausts, luxury overwhelms, and, by heaping on fuel, quite puts out, the fire.

Where is that dignity which reason exacts, and which revelation exalts, in man? In what I have said on that subject, I have, I think, done more to

our purpose, than he who measures the heavens, and numbers the stars. I have taken (as I conceive) the true measure of man: that extensive measure rising above the skies, which the Centaur dwarfs down to the scanty span of the brute creation, to the *bestia triumphanti*; and, making (might I so speak) a dung-hill of our condition, with the cock in the fable, for a grain of sensuality, spurns the jewel away; the powers angelic, the radiant beams of the Divinity, in the real man.

But while I contemplate his grandeur (so mixt our nature, so great and little is man,) I feel his weakness: in mind, and body, I feel his infirmities—Pain, this instant, stops my pen—stops it short of what I had proposed to say.—It bids me take, while I may, my leave of him I love.—I take a solemn, because perhaps a final, leave. It is at least possible, we may meet no more: no more in this foreign land; in this gloomy apartment of the boundless universe of God.

O thou the last, the strongest hold that earth has on me! my friend in JESUS CHRIST! my rival in immortal hope! and my companion (I trust) for eternity! come to my bosom: though so far remote, I take thee to my heart. Souls suffer no separation from obstruction of matter, or distance of place; oceans may roll between us, and climates interpose, in vain. The whole material creation is no bar to the winged mind. Farewel.—Through boundless ages fare thou well. The dignity of Man, and blessing of Heaven, be with thee! the broad hand of the Almighty cover thee! mayest thou shine, when the sun is quenched! mayest thou live, and triumph, when time expires!

This cordial duty done, this human debt discharged, my mind is eased, my spirits revive, my pain is less. And when this endless letter is ended, I shall drop thee for the present; and this idle pen, and an

idler world (that other feather in the scale of eternity,) for ever. He that drops the world, before that drops him, he only knows its real value; and the value of his own soul. And whatever the gaiety of the world pretends to, he only can have a solid, permanent, and uninterrupted joy of heart, who builds it on the rock; on hope of the divine mercy. Give a man the world, and give him no more; and his happiness is at an end; the human heart will necessarily feel a futurity, through all the super-abundance earth can heap on it: nothing can possibly give it a peace independent of an hereafter: that point of view in his creation, that purchase of blood in his redemption, and yet, in human conduct, that ever-neglected All of man.

Ask the last bill of mortality, ask pleasure's or ambition's triumph most triumphant, what is human life? Knowledge of the world recommends recess; knowledge of life reconciles to the grave. Few sufficiently consider how great mercy is implied in the grant of death. With a heart quite disengaged, its cable cut, imploring a smooth passage and gentle gale, bound for that port whence none return, I wait the mighty MASTER's call: that call irresistible, which every moment should expect; which every fool forgets; every knave dreads; every wise man welcomes; and every monarch obeys.

And yet, my friend, some of our few coevals close not altogether with this way of thinking; but rather seem to judge, that some little degree of precipitation may be laid to its charge. As the dial knows not the hour it points out; so they, by their infirmities and decays, discover their time of day to all but themselves. Their desires grow stronger, as enjoyments grow more coy. It is somewhat to be feared, that their hearts gravitate almost as much as their scarce animated clay, and take but few and feeble flights above the level of the world, though

very excellent things are spoken of thee, thou welcome haven of eternal rest! thou delightful region of inextinguishable love! thou great goal of perfection! thou bright meridian of glory! thou boundless ocean of unrepenting pleasure! thou city of God!

And is man invited to this fulness of fruition? and is man importuned to partake the glories of the Almighty!—He that weighs not well this transcendent height of love divine, is far from being able to comprehend the terrible depth of human guilt. And what guilt so deep as that of a baptized infidel? A rank heathen rising out of the sacred font, is Reason's greatest shock, the deepest wound of rectitude, the blackest brand of earth, the sigh of angels, a second spear in the side of the most blessed JESUS, and the supreme triumph of the foe to God and man.

Most gracious God! in happiness and dignity, how widely distant is man from man! in both, what an immense superiority has the pious believer! scarce seems of the same species the believing, and apostate, world. To the first, how justly may we cry out, O ye happy sons of the fallen Adam! where is the damage you received from your father's fall? where are the once lamented miseries of life? where are the once unsurmountable terrors of death fled? I discern the dignity of man, when his carcase is in the dust. I congratulate his happiness while the worm is feasting on him. Rejoice, O ye dead! exult and sing, ye dark inhabitants of the grave! For do I not behold, even in the grave, the comfort of heaven, when, with an eye of Christian faith, in heaven I behold a man! the man CHRIST JESUS! and with transport and adoration let me resound the lofty language of the prophet,—“A man the fellow of the Almighty*.”

* Zech. xiii. 7.

The Conclusion.

AND now, my friend! let us consider how deplorably wretched is that man amongst us, who is deaf to such a voice, and blind to such a sight? And how criminally wretched is he, if he voluntarily declines them! if he voluntarily recalls the suspended curse; obstinately presents disarmed death with his mortal sting again; and pours out, in his distraction, all the vials of its original bitterness on the days, how dismal and unredeemed, of an apostate human life! What a formidable revelation does such a man bespeak in lieu of that which brought pardon and peace! what a revelation of no glad tidings awaits him, when his now-involving cloud breaks, and truth thunders on the dreadfully illuminated soul, at the no-distant hour of death!

It is, indeed, in man's option, which of these revelations he will admit, (one he must;) but it is not in man's wisdom to make the least apology for a wrong option in so plain and important a point. A point how plain! I shall here just touch on a single proof of the truth of Christianity, which renders any further proof, among proofs innumerable, unnecessary with me, to create and support our Christian faith.

Every thing in the natural world is a proof of a God; and almost every thing in the moral world is a proof of a revelation. As, in the material universe, all exactly corresponds with the previous ideas of it in the divine mind, and in a substantial copy renders legible to man its invisible pattern, in the thought of the ALMIGHTY; so a complete history of mankind (if such could be had) would be little more than the same ALMIGHTY's prophetic word in scripture materialized into fact. The prophets

are more accurate and authentic historians of the future, than the most happy genius, uninspired, can possibly be of the past. And want we miracles for our conviction? The series of scripture-prophecies accomplished, is the most striking of miracles: it is a miracle not expiring in a transient act; but of great longevity, persisting in a perpetually increasing weight and validity, through the protracted course of many thousand years. It is a living, growing, permanent, paramount miracle, lighted up as a lamp of illumination for all ages; that all able to see, might be quite unable to disbelieve; quite unable to retain reason, and at the same time renounce belief. For if the scripture-prophecies are fulfilled, the scripture is the word of God; and if the scripture is the word of God, Christianity cannot be false. Shall we reject it as false, when, in the present state of almost all nations, we are surrounded, and condemned, by a full ocular demonstration of its being true? Let us dispute our own existence, if we would continue of a piece with this.

Where is our natural curiosity? and that, in points which concern us most? Would we know what we are, or what we may or must be to all eternity? Nothing but revelation can tell us either. So that if we acted on no higher motive than mere instinct, revelation would be precious in our sight. But vice extinguishes not our reason only, but our instinct too when it would do us any good. Either the strongest instinct of curiosity is extinguished by it, or there is an annihilating and pernicious self-denial in infidels, if their most natural curiosity is still alive. Revelation was written for our instruction; and are we too wise to be instructed by God himself? throw we by unread, and as of no consequence, an unsealed letter sent to us from the ALMIGHTY?

In our infidels it is no less than defiance of common sense, no less than hardened impudence to the

nature of man, to pretend, that, on due inquiry, they want proof of the truth of the gospel. Its proof is not only great, but amazing; it is not only sufficient to convince, but astonish: such its accumulated, overwhelming evidence, so truly marvellous its light, that, if rejected, it lays us under a necessity of rejecting reason, and revelation, together. And is not reason obeyed, the sole dignity, glory, grandeur, of gods, and men? Nothing can so much degrade as the violation of reason; and no violation of reason is equal to a wrong option in this point supreme. Too faint is the strongest colouring of all the severe fables of antiquity, to reach an absurdity so absurd.

That of Circe's styè, and Chiron's stud, falls short of the mark: for reason, in those days, had not such powerful motives to combat, or such glaring lights to resist; and guilt blackens, in proportion to the strength of the lights resisted, and the motives overcome.

Since then (as has been proved) if reason makes a man, by ceasing to be Christians, they cease to be men; by what term shall we call those, whom no term can defame? Let, therefore, your offended sister pardon my parable; and let no honest man, for the future, so far offend propriety, and profane our language, as to join in one abused word such repugnant ideas as those of the Centaur and the man; one the idea of a being, horridly rejoicing in the miserable and mistaken thought, that this short life, shortened by vice and vanity, is his all; and that, like the snuff of a candle, it shall go for ever: rejoicing to think, that after all his bustle and ambition, he shall only, by his putrid carcase, add rankness to a clod of earth, and defile the dirt. The other idea is that of a being big with humble, but triumphant, hope, of exalting, with his immortal spirit, joy celestial; of adding melody to seraphic choirs, in ceaseless hallelujahs to their eternal king. "Sing praises,

“sing praises to our God; sing praises, sing praises
 “to our King. Praise him, all ye angels! praise
 “him, all his host! Praise him, sun and moon!
 “Praise him, all ye stars, and light?” For a fairer
 light, a nobler star, a more illustrious sun, is risen;
 the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings;
 and all the glories of unbounded creation are outshone
 by the smallest beam of the gospel; by the faintest
 hope of wrath appeased, and eternal life.

Yet this is that light, which some, in their superior wisdom, would extinguish as superfluous to man, and set up the dim taper of their reason in its stead.

“O thou worst guide, philosopher, and friend!

“Say, for thou know’st, what is it to be wise?”

ESSAY ON MAN.

With equal wisdom, thou mightest imagine the sun superfluous and unnecessary to the material world; and call on chaos for primæval darkness, as the great blessing of mankind. Say, for now indeed thou knowest, is not Lucifer in the list of such benefactors as these?

Though in this his Lordship is quite as good a friend to mankind, as he is a philosopher in his materiality of the soul; yet I will venture advancing towards that precious doctrine, so far, as to call, without scruple, such sort of imaginations the thoughts of the body: for from the body’s predominance they necessarily rise; and that necessity proves the necessity of religion, which they resist: so that such men (which, perhaps, they are not aware of) while, as much as they can, they condemn religion, they commend it too; they as loudly call for it, as the disease for the cure; for religion is nothing, but an expedient for supporting, against the body’s assaults and encroachments, the sacred interests of the soul.

At your request, Sir, in the wide-spread ruins of our faith and virtue, I have taken a slight view of a more

melancholy scene than could be presented by famine, pestilence, or the sword: but, by God's grace, we shall repent, and not suffer our greatest glory to become our greatest dread; nor suffer our prime and unspeakable blessing, Immortality, to render existence the most insupportable curse. What a terrible inversion is this of the high favours of Heaven! This must be the case, when man is all sense: for to sense nothing exists but the present. Our present is so dear, that our future is undone. Strange conduct! when our step out of life is so short; and so sure, sudden, and innumerable, our accidents in it, that almost every moment assures us, that, unless in time we lay hold on our invisible, and, to reason alone, existing God, we shall soon fall from all we held so dear; and that then, not only all our happiness, but all our hope, is at an end.

What is there, O my countrymen! O my friend! O my poor, endangered, immortal soul! what is there, from Adam to this hour, but fully confirms what I say? The world allures us; the world condemns us; he who takes that kind advice, which, through his own experience, the world conveys, will despise all its charms. As ignorance teems with infidelity, so knowledge is a fast friend of faith. If we would but know, what we cannot but know; if we would but believe our senses in what passes, and our common records in what has passed; it would not only reconcile us to, but almost supply the place of, our creed; so very natural a growth is the Christian of the man.

As natural a growth of an infidel is a beast: a beast by God uncreated; by Adam unnamed. That defect Adam's meanest son has supplied, by writing CENTAUR in the horrid gap, which the bold infidel has made, by the desperate erasure of his Christian name.

Is this thought too opprobrious, and a term of re-

proach? I will make some amends by a short hint of advice, which may save from reproach the whole length of their lives. "Let not the brute any longer run away with the man, lest something more dreadful should run away with the brute."

If this advice is refused—as Alexander said of the Persian effeminate army, "There are many enemies but few soldiers;" so say I of this Paphian isle, There are a multitude of people, but a small remnant of men. And of all brutes, the most brutal is the volunteer in brutality; the brute self-made; the brute, not from the decree, but abuse, of nature; the strange brute-affrighting brute, with the stature, vesture, voice, and face of man; the brute mysterious, irrationally rational, and (with horror let me speak it) deplorably immortal.

Does the Centaur still sound too harsh in their ears? I will so far indulge them, as to change it for Slave; and instead of making free with their hides, only rattle their chains; for chains they wear, galling, infamous chains! Till stubborn and wild will is broken by grace and reason, no man is free; but madly prefers the heavy burdens of his lusts, and the scourges of conscience, to the glorious liberty of the sons of GOD.

And is it possible that pride should be the growth of slavery? They are proud of bondage, triumph in infamy, and imagine that in their high flights of folly and riot unrestrained there is something great. No man is great, till he sees that every thing in this world is little; and of all that is little, that they are the least. Would they know what is greatness? Great is he, and he alone, who makes the whole creation, and its amazing cause, the circumference, and his own true interest the centre, of his thoughts; who has strength and steadiness to weigh, in perpetual and equal balance, Right and Wrong, Body and soul, Time and Eternity, Nature and GOD; and so weighing, to

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disdain any very anxious thought, for less than the greatest good his limited nature admits, and his all-powerful God has promised to bestow: that God, "whose are the pillars of the earth, and who has set the world upon them; who in his wrath thunders out of heaven, and his adversaries are broken to pieces."

In this, Sir, in giving our supreme good our supreme effort and concern, in spite of all temptation, lies the greatness of man. Well may it lie in a prudence, such a prudence as angels cannot exceed. If this is wanting, vain are all other pretensions to greatness, whether of king, hero, or philosopher. And a Cæsar, a Marlborough, a Newton, a Bolingbroke, a Juggler, Tumbler, and Scaramouch, may be thrown together into one promiscuous heap, of equal impotence for attaining true greatness. The performance, indeed, of each of these candidates for glory, the multitude may admire; but the performer, at the same time, will be condemned by the wise, as little-minded and mean; nay, as a very fool, in the language of Scripture; that is, in the judgment of God.

You see, therefore, to what titles of renown our fine men, on the strictest inquiry, may put in a just pretence: fool! slave! centaur!—The last is the newest, and (which would be well for them) may be the least understood; but let them chuse which they please. Were it referred to me, their anti-christian glory should be quite aggrandized, and shine, like his Holiness, triple-crowned with all three.

To that tremendous Power, which alone is truly great and good; in whose favour is all light, life, hope, peace, joy, and salvation; be thanks, praise, and dominion over the rebel, fool, slave, and centaur, in our hearts. And may our hearts, thus exercised, have a lively feeling of the God invisible; and, panting for the rivers of true pleasure at his right hand,

abhor the life in vogue; and in faith unshaken, and virtue unfeigned, be confirmed for evermore; nor longer (to the reproach eternal of the present age) let our sins, as well as our situation, proclaim us to be

—“*Toto divisos orbe Britannos.*” VIRG.

But, to damp my rising hope, I know not if another distinction of Britons from the greatest part of mankind, may not have been the glorious indeed, but fatal, cause of this most ignominious effect. It is the great glory of God to draw good out of evil. To draw evil out of good, is the great infamy of man.

I suspect, that an insolent pride in British liberty, in some measure inspires British licence of thought and extravagance of opinion; which as extravagant a practice for ever follows: if so, vice and infidelity are as much our national distempers, as the scurvy or the spleen. Though discretion much befriends happiness, happiness is no friend to discretion. Great blessings intoxicate. Liberty, fraught with blessings as it is when unabused, has perhaps been abused to our destruction. And as British malt, sublimated into the most pernicious liquor, now so much in use, so British liberty, carried into licentiousness, has poisoned and brutalized the British state. By too much exalting our spirits, it corrupts our manners; and that glory of our constitution is the disgrace of our lives. Purely to prove themselves free men, some turn infidels: hanging themselves would be as good, and, to the public, a less pernicious proof. Such men should perform a long quarantine ere admitted to the embrace even of a brother. Heaven preserve thee, my friend, from the freedom, and wisdom, and happiness, now in vogue! He is most free who is bound by the laws; he is most wise who owns himself weak; he is most happy who abridges his pleasures; and he is most magnanimous, O ye bold, intrepid, Heaven-defying Britons! who fears his God.

He, indeed, is the most magnanimous; for by that fear he is fortified against all other. And he is by far the most happy; for the divine favour, the light of God's countenance, is the sun of the human soul, whence all its vegetation of real felicity; and tho' the world (which from him receives all its feeble rays) may greatly shine in our eyes, yet as wisely may we expect vigorous and vivifying heat from the moon, as any solid satisfaction from it.

But just one word to the busy, ambitious, learned, and gay. Vice and virtue excepted, no man on earth can say, what is good or ill; in as great a tumult and uproar as your passions are, O ye busy and ambitious about every thing else! and to love and labour at what God commands, and to desire and hope what he promises, is the single great lesson, O ye learned! and the single true pleasure, O ye gay! of human life.

And, now, my friend, farewell. I must trust myself no longer with the pen; for while I think there is a possibility, that, touched by some happy stroke, but one fellow-mortal may be raised from a perishing man of the earth to a blessed immortal, my busy mind perpetually suggests new hints, and my heart knows not how to refrain from pursuing them. The volume grows upon my hands, till its very bulk would defeat its end. New rays of thought dart in upon me, which, like cross lights, confound and perplex each other. Something of this you may have perceived already. Even Centaurs have been human; and I feel the strong tie of humanity, when going to bid them a last, an everlasting farewell. Like one about to leave unhappy friends in the midst of a destruction, which yet, by timely care, they might escape, still, at the moment of departure, some new caution occurs to me, some new exhortation, something unsaid, or not so well said as it might have been. But now, the adieu must be final. With only this addi-

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tional, and still more urgent, and to them surprising, motive for reformation, *viz.* my assuring them, that what I have hitherto, thro' tenderness, allowed to pass for fable, is actual fact: That the Centaur is indeed not fabulous: That a man without religion is really a beast; and such is he pronounced in Scripture, where it is said that "he also is flesh *;" that is, is a brute! and (what should strike them not a little) this is assigned as the reason for sweeping away our degenerate race by the flood. A brute, in truth, he is; with this only difference, that his superior understanding gives him more venom than the most envenomed of serpents; and enables him to do more fatal mischief to himself and others, than without the curse of reason, of abused reason, could possibly be done. So far therefore is it from satire, that kind admonition is all which the word Centaur implies. And as in some words there was once imagined to reside a magic power over dæmons themselves, that opinion might still prevail, if the design of these letters, to the wish of all honest men, could succeed, and the foul nature of the Centaur be cast out by the name. If this should be the fortunate event, these pages would live in the lives of those they shall reclaim: and if so, O Bolingbroke! and you, his applauding idolizers! what to this is that vain immortality which the meanest writers wish, and which the noblest can scarce attain? Praise is an error, where pardon is indulgence; and pardon is indulgence to the brightest parts misapplied. They rather provoke, than please, the worthy mind, by laying it under the disagreeable necessity, and clashing disposition, of admiring the writer, and disapproving the man: which, in some sort, is like admiring Nero for his fiddle, when, through his own frenzy, his glorious capital was in flames.

I am, my dear friend,

Nov. 29, 1754.

Truly yours.

* Gen. vi.

P O S T S C R I P T.

I RECEIVED your objections, and thank you for them. I believe every judicious reader will make the same. All I can say, for mitigation of their censure, is, that they who take on them to read lectures in this laughing age, if they wish an audience but moderately large, must have weight enough to make impression on the serious; and levity enough to catch those wanton ears, which, unless tickled by that feather, would continue shut as close as their silly hearts are to virtue, though an angel should take the chair.

I know you are so kindly concerned for your friend's reputation, that the mixture of levity with solemnity, in these letters, makes you apprehensive of its exposing the writer to censure or ridicule. Yet how is it possible to write on so dreadfully mixed a subject, as the ways of man, without being agitated by the most contradictory emotions? his follies, so fantastically wrong, so ludicrously absurd; his capacities for virtue and happiness, so noble; his vices so shocking; their consequence so deplorable!—So earnestly desirous I am of waking him from that dream, in which he nods upon the brink of eternal ruin, that if nothing can do it but my own disgrace, my own buffoonery, (as perhaps he will think it,) I rejoice to fall so low. If he will but laugh with me at himself, he is freely welcome to laugh at me as much as he sees cause. It is not his applause, but his welfare, that is sought. Amendment is the point in view. That point unproposed, (and could the Viscount * propose it?) all censure is mere malice, and mere impertinence is all harangue; and entitles a Tully, a Bolingbroke, and a parrot, to just the same portion

* Lord Bolingbroke.

of our esteem and applause. Would you, my friend, judge aright of men? Ask not what they have done, but why; or their characters will be still in the dark.

—But I fear I am setting your judgment of men too right for my own interest; I must leave it under the power of some partiality, for the sake of your humble servant.

Pardon one word more. *Centaur*† is of Greek extraction, and signifies *stimulation*. May it here prove (as intended) a spur to virtue; and, most, in myself. Standing in awe of my own pen, may I take the counsel I give: thus only can I be sure of doing any good; thus only can I boldly say, without the reader's leave, that I have not writ in vain. Is not this a new expedient for writing to some little purpose; and an expedient of no small service to the public, if all our writers would use the same? Their numbers, then, would be less a nuisance; and half the nation (blessed change!) would aim at virtue as well as fame. This, too, might be some sort of apology for those heroes of the pen, who, dauntless at their own danger, with the spirit of a Curtius, for the sake of their dear country, leap headlong into the press, (too hasty patriots!) and perish there.

“Vincit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido.”

VIRG.

† From Κενταυρ, *stimulare*.

THE
FOREIGN ADDRESS;
OCCASIONED BY THE
BRITISH FLEET,
AND THE
POSTURE OF AFFAIRS,
M.DCC.XXXIV.

Written in the character of a SAILOR.

Musa dedit fidibus divos puerosque Deorum. HOR.

THE
FOREIGN ADDRESS

BOOK BY THE

BRITISH FLEET

AND THE

POSTAL OFFICES

OF THE

WEST INDIES

AND THE

THE
FOREIGN ADDRESS;
ON THE
POSTURE OF AFFAIRS.

I.

YE guardian gods! who wait on kings,
And gently touch the secret springs
Of rising thought, solicit, I beseech,
For a poor stranger come from far;
Procure a suppliant traveller
Ease of access, and the soft hour of speech.

II.

'Tis gain'd: hail, monarchs great and wise!
From distant climes, and dusky skies,
O'er seas and lands I flew, your ear to claim:
Yours is the sun, and purple vine;
Deep in the frozen north I pine;
Nor vine, nor sun, could warm me like my theme.

III.

A theme how great! on yonder tide
A leafless forest spreading wide
The labour of the deep, my muse surveys:
A Fleet, whose empire o'er the wave
You grant, Time strengthens, Nature gave;
Now big with death, the terror of the seas!

IV.

Ye great by sea! ye shades ador'd!
Who fir'd the bomb, and bath'd the sword,
Arise! arise! arise! 'tis Britain charms;
Arise, ye boast of former wars!
And pointing, to your glorious scars,
Rouse me to verse, your martial sons to arms.

V.

'Tis done : and see, sweet Clio brings
 From heav'n her deep-resounding strings :
 Clio! the * god which gave thy charming shell,
 Demands its most exalted strain,
 To sing the sov'reign of the main :
 Of Ocean's queen what wonders wilt thou tell?

VI.

Such wonders as may pass for sport,
 Or vision in a southern court :
 But, mighty Thrones! those truths which make me
 Your fathers saw, your sons shall see : [glow.
 Then quit your infidelity ;
 Some truths 'tis better to believe than know.

VII.

Believe me, Kings! at Britain's nod,
 From each enchanted grove and wood,
 Huge oaks stalk down th' unshaded mountain's side ;
 The lofty pines assume new forms,
 Fly round the globe, and live in forms ;
 And tread and triumph on the wond'ring tide.

VIII.

She nods again : the lab'ring earth
 Discloses a stupendous birth ;
 In smoking rivers runs her molten ore :
 Thence, monsters of enormous size,
 And hideous nature, frowning rise,
 Flame from the deck, from trembling bastions roar.

IX.

These ministers of wrath fulfil,
 On empires wide, an island's will :
 Ye nations ! know ; know, all ye scepter'd pow'rs!
 In sulph'rous night, and massy balls,
 And floods of flame, the tempest falls,
 When stern Britannia's awful senate lours.

* Neptune.

X.

Bold is the style, when hearts are bold!
 Would Britain have her anger told?
 O! never let a meaner language sound,
 Than that which thro' black æther rould,
 Than that which prostrates human souls,
 And rocks pale realms, when angry Jove has frown'd.

XI.

In peace she sheaths her courage keen,
 And spares her nitrous magazine;
 Her cannon slumber at the world's desire;
 But, give just cause, at once they blaze,
 At once they thunder from the seas,
 Touch'd by their injur'd master's soul of fire.

XII.

Then Furies rise! the battle raves!
 And rends the skies, and warms the waves,
 And calls a tempest from the peaceful deep,
 In spite of nature, spite of Jove,
 Whilst all serene, and hush'd above,
 The boist'rous winds in azure chambers sleep.

XIII.

This, this, my Monarchs! is the scene
 For hearts of proof, for gods of men;
 Here War's whole sting is shot, whole heart is spent!
 You sport in arms; how pale, how tame,
 How lambent, is Bellona's flame,
 How her storms languish on the continent!

XIV.

A swarm of deaths the mighty bomb
 Now scatters from her glowing womb;
 Now the chain'd bolts in dread alliance join'd,
 Red-wing'd with an expanding blast,
 Sweep, in black whirlwinds, man and mast,
 And leave a sing'd and naked hull behind.

XV.

Now—but I'm struck with pale despair;
 My Patrons! what a burst was there!
 The strong-ribb'd barques at once displying fly!
 Infatiate death! compendious fate!
 Deep wound to some brave bleeding state!
 One moment's guilt a thousand heroes die.

XVI.

The great, gay, graceful, young and brave,
 (Short obsequies!) the sable wave
 Involves in endless night: ye graveless dead!
 Where are your conquests? now you rove
 Pale, pensive, thro' the coral grove,
 Or shrink from Britain in your oozy bed.

XVII.

While virgins fair, with tender toil,
 Of fragrant blooms their gardens spoil,
 Low ly the brows for which the wreath's design'd,
 In sea-weed wrapt; alas! how vain
 The hope, the joy, the grief, the pain,
 The love, and godlike valour, of mankind?

XVIII.

Of brass his heart who durst explore,
 Shut up in triple brass and more,
 Who when explor'd the secret durst explain?
 How, in one instant, at one blow,
 The maiden's sigh, the mother's throe,
 Of half a widow'd land to render vain.

XIX.

See! yon cowl'd friar in his cell,
 With sulphur, flame, and crucible:
 And can the charms of gold that saint inspire!
 O curst cause! O curs'd event!
 O wondrous power of accident!
 He rivals gods, and sets the globe on fire.

XX.

But the rank growth of modern ill,
 Too well deserv'd that fatal skill,
 The skill by which destruction swiftly runs;
 And seas, and lands, and worlds, lays waste,
 With far more terror, far more haste,
 Than ancient Nimrod, and his haughty sons.

XXI.

In frown and force old war must yield;
 The chariot scyth'd, which mow'd the field,
 The ram, the cask'd elephant, were tame,
 Tame to rang'd ordnance, which denies
 Superior terror to the skies,
 And claims the cloud, the thunder, and the flame.

XXII.

The flame, the thunder, and the cloud,
 The night by day, the sea of blood,
 Hosts whirl'd in air, the yell, the sinking throng,
 The graveless dead, an ocean warm'd,
 A firmament by mortals storm'd,
 To wrong'd Britannia's angry brow belong.

XXIII.

Or do I dream, or do I rave?
 Or do I see the gloomy cave;
 Where Jove's red bolts the giant-brothers frame?
 The swarthy gods of toil and heat
 Loud peals on mountain-anvils beat,
 And panting tempests rouse the roaring flame.

XXIV.

Ye sons of Etna! hear my call;
 Let your unfinish'd labours fall,
 That shield of Mars, Minerva's helmet blue:
 Suspend your toils, ye brawny throng!
 Charm'd by the magic of my song;
 Drop the feign'd thunder, and attempt the true.

XXV.

Begin ; and first take winged flight,
 Fierce flames, and clouds of thickest night,
 And trembling terror, paler than the dead;
 Then borrow from the north his roar,
 Mix groans and death; one phial pour,
 Of dread Britannia's wrath, and it is made.

XXVI.

Yet, Peace celestial! may thy charms
 Still fire our breasts, tho' clad in arms:
 If scenes of blood avenging fates decree,
 For thee the sword brave Britons wield;
 For thee, charge o'er th' embattled field;
 Or plunge thro' seas, thro' crimson seas, for thee.

XXVII.

Even now for peace the gods are press'd;
 We woo the nations to be bless'd;
 For peace, victorious Kings! we call to you:
 For peace, on pinions of the dove,
 Soft emblem of eternal love?
 Thro' trackless air, and desert skies, I flew.

XXVIII.

My * former lays of rough contents.
 Of waves, and wars, and armaments,
 Were but as peals of ordnance to confess
 Your height of dignity, to clear
 Your deaf, your late-obstructed ear,
 And wake attention to more mild address.

XXIX.

Have I not heard you both declare,
 Your hearts detest the purple war,
 And melt in anguish for the world's repose!
 Hail then! all hail! your wish is crown'd,
 Your godlike zeal thro' time renown'd,
 Thro' Europe bless'd; with joy her heart o'erflows.

* The foregoing stanzas.

XXX.

Your friend, your brother of the North,
 To meet your arms, comes smiling forth,
 And leads soft-handed peace : how pow'rful he!
 His num'rous race, the blossoms bright
 Of golden empire, radiant sight!
 Endless beam on into eternity.

XXXI.

What long allies!—the virgin train
 Your most obdurate foes may gain :
 See, how their charms in lineal lustre shine!
 Thro' ev'ry genuine branch, the fire
 Has darted rays of temper'd fire ;
 The mother breath'd soft air, and bloom divine.

XXXII.

How fair the field! ye * Aonian bees!
 The flow'rs ambrosial fondly seize,
 Luxurious draw the sweet Hyblean strain ;
 That gods may lean from heav'n to hear
 And my thron'd patron's ravish'd ear
 The soul's rich nectar drink, and thirst again.

XXXIII.

Even mine they taste ; and with success :
 Ambition's fumes my strains repress ;
 The fever flies ; no noxious thoughts ferment ;
 No frenzy, taking friends for foes ;
 The pulse subsides ; they seek repose ;
 Nor I my winged embassy repent.

XXXIV.

No: by the blood of Blenheim's plain,
 I swear, the rumour'd war is vain ;
 Shall Gallic faith and friendship ever cease ?
 I swear by Europe's lovely dread,
 I swear by great Eliza's shade,
 The wise Iberian is the friend of peace.

* Ye poets,

XXXV.

Yet, lest I fail, (for prophets old
 Not all infallibly foretold,) 8
 We fet our naval terrors in array.
 Know, Britons! an AUGUSTUS reigns;
 If foes compel, send forth your chains,
 While haughty thrones, uncensur'd, might obey.

XXXVI.

O could I sing as you have fought!
 I'd raise a monument of thought!
 Bright as the sun!—how you burn at my heart!
 How the drums all around,
 Soul-rising resound!
 Swift drawn from the thigh,
 How the swords flame on high!
 How the cannon, deep knell!
 Fates of kingdoms foretell!
 How to battle, to battle, our fathers brave part,
 How to battle, to conquest, to triumph, we dart!

XXXVII.

But who gives conquest? He, whose ray
 To darkness turns the blaze of day;
 Whose boundless favour far outflows the main;
 Whose pow'r the raging waves can still,
 And curb more rebel human will,—
 With peace, O! bless us, or in war sustain.

XXXVIII.

Dost thou sustain?—Ye twinkling fry!
 That swim the seas, glide gently by;
 Tho' your scales glitter, tho' your numbers swarm,
 Ah! gently glide, for life's dear sake;
 Nor dare Leviathan awake,
 Who spouts a river, and who breathes a storm.

XXXIX.

And now, who censures this address?
 Thus, crowns, states, common men, make peace;
 They swell, soothe, double, dive, swear, pray, defy:
 And when rank int'rest has prevail'd,
 And artifice the treaty seal'd,
 Stark love and conscience own the bastard tye.

XL.

Ambassadors, ye mouths of kings!
 Ye missive monarchs! empire's wings!
 What tho' the muse your province proudly chose;
 'Tis a reprisal fairly made,
 Her province you long since invade,
 Ye perfect poets! in the vale of prose.

XLI.

More safe, O muse! that humble vale,
 Than the proud surge and stormy gale:
 Thy dang'rous seas with wrecks are cover'd o'er:
 Dulness and frenzy curse thy streams,
 Rocks, infamous for murder'd names!
 O! strike thy swelling sails, and make to shore.

XLII.

While warmer climes, in cooler strains,
 Or tented fields, or dusty plains,
 The bleeding horse and horseman hurl to ground;
 'Tis mine to sing, and sing the first,
 That mighty shock, that dreadful burst
 Of war, which bellows thro' the seas profound.

XLIII.

Nor mean the song, or great my blame;
 When such the patrons, such the theme,
 Who might not glow, soar, paint, with rage divine?
 Truth, simple truth, I proudly drest
 In Fancy's robe; her flow'ry vest
 Dipp'd in the curious colours of the Nine.

XLIV.

But, ah! 'tis past; I sink; I faint; or but
 No more can glow, or soar, or paint;
 The resluent raptures from my bosom rowl;
 To heav'n returns the sacred maid,
 And all her golden visions fade,
 Ne'er to revisit my tumultuous soul.

XLV.

My vocal shell! which Thetis form'd
 Beneath the waves, which Venus warm'd
 With all her charms, (if ancient tales be true,)
 And in thy pearly bosom glow'd
 Ere Pæan silver chords bestow'd;
 My shell! which Clio gave, which kings applaud,
 Which Europe's bleeding genius call'd abroad,
 Adieu, pacific lyre! my laurel'd thrones! adieu.
 Hear, Atticus! your sailor's song; I sing, I live for you.

T H E
I N S T A L M E N T,
M D C C X X V I.

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE
Sir ROBERT WALPOLE.

Quæsitam meritis.

HOR.

WITH invocations some their breasts inflame;
I need no muse, a Walpole is my theme.
Ye mighty dead! ye garter'd sons of praise!
Our morning-stars! our boast in former days!
Which hov'ring o'er, your purple wings display,
Lur'd by the pomp of this distinguish'd day;
Stoop and attend: by one the knee be bound;
One, throw the mantle's crimson folds around;
By that, the sword on his proud thigh be plac'd,
This clasp the di'mond girdle round his waist;
His breast, with rays, let just Godolphin spread;
Wife Burleigh plant the plumage on his head;
And Edward own, since first he fix'd the race,
None prefs'd fair glory with a swifter pace.

When Fate would call some mighty genius forth,
To wake a drooping age to godlike worth,
Or aid some fav'rite king's illustrious toil,
It bids his blood with gen'rous ardour boil;
His blood, from Virtue's celebrated source,
Pour'd down the steep of time, a lengthen'd course!
That men prepar'd may just attention pay,
Warn'd by the dawn to mark the glorious day,

180 THE INSTALMENT.

When all the scatter'd merits of his line,
Collected to a point intensely shine.

See Britain! see thy Walpole shine from far,
His azure ribbon, and his radiant star;
A star that, with auspicious beams, shall guide
Thy vessel safe thro' Fortune's roughest tide.

If peace still smiles, by this shall Commerce steer,
A finish'd course, in triumph round the sphere;
And gath'ring tribute from each distant shore,
In Britain's lap the world's abundance pour.
If war's ordain'd, this star shall dart its beams
Thro' that black cloud, which rising from the Thâmes,
With thunder form'd of Brunswic's wrath, is sent
To claim the seas, and awe the continent:
This shall direct it where the bolt to throw,
A star for us, a comet to the foe.

At this the muse shall kindle, and aspire:
My breast, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire;
The streams of royal bounty, turn'd by thee,
Refresh the dry domains of poesy.

My fortune shews, when arts are Walpole's care,
What slender worth forbids us to despair?

Be this thy partial smile from censure free?

'Twas meant for Merit, tho' it fell on me.

Since Brunswic's smile has authoris'd my muse,
Chaste be her conduct, and sublime her views.

False praises are the whoredoms of the pen,

Which prostitute fair Fame to worthless men.

This profanation of celestial fire,

Makes fools despise what Wisdom should admire.

Let those I praise to distant times be known,

Not by their author's merit, but their own.

If others think the task is hard, to weed

From verse rank Flattery's vivacious seed,

And rooted deep; one means must set them free;

Patron! and Patriot! let them sing of thee.

While vulgar trees ignoble honours wear,
Nor those retain when winter chills the year;

The gen'rous orange, fav'rite of the sun,
 With vig'rous charms can thro' the seasons run;
 Defies the storm with her tenacious green;
 And flow'rs and fruits in rival pomp are seen;
 Where blossoms fall, still fairer blossoms spring;
 And midst their sweets the feather'd poets sing.

On Walpole thus, may pleas'd Britannia view
 At once her ornament, and profit too;
 The fruit of service, and the bloom of fame,
 Matur'd and gilded by the royal beam.
 He, when the nipping blasts of Envy rise,
 Its guilt can pity, and its rage despise;
 Let fall no honours, but, securely great,
 Unfaded holds the colour of his fate:
 No winter knows, tho' rustling factions press;
 By wisdom deeply rooted in success:
 One glory shed, a brighter is display'd *;
 And the charm'd muses shelter in the shade.

O how I long, enkindled by the theme,
 In deep eternity to launch thy name!
 Thy name in view, no rights of verse I plead,
 But what chaste Truth indites, old Time shall read.

" Behold! a man of ancient faith and blood,
 " Which soon beat high for arts, and public good;
 " Whose glory great, but natural, appears,
 " The genuine growth of services and years;
 " No sudden exhalation drawn on high,
 " And fondly gilt by partial majesty:
 " One bearing greatest toils with greatest ease;
 " One born to serve us, and yet born to please;
 " Whom, while our rights in equal scales he lays,
 " The prince may trust, and yet the people praise;
 " His genius ardent, yet his judgment clear,
 " His tongue is flowing, and his heart sincere;
 " His counsel guides, his temper cheers, our ills;
 " And, smiling, gives three kingdoms cause to smile."

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* Knight of the Bath, and then of the Garter.

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Joy then to Britain, blest'd with such a son;
 To Walpole joy, by whom the prize is won;
 Who nobly conscious meets the smiles of Fate;
True greatness lyes in daring to be great.
 Let dastard souls, in affectation, run
 To shades, nor wear bright honours fairly won;
 Such men prefer, misled by false applause,
 The pride of modesty to Virtue's cause.
 Honours, which make the face of Virtue fair,
 'Tis great to merit, and 'tis wise to wear;
 'Tis holding up the prize to public view,
 Confirms grown Virtue, and inflames the new;
 Heightens the lustre of our age and clime,
 And sheds rich seeds of worth for future time.

Proud chiefs alone, in fields of slaughter fam'd,
 Of old, this azure bloom of glory claim'd;
 As, when stern Ajax pour'd a purple flood,
 The violet rose, fair daughter of his blood.
 Now rival wisdom dares the wreath divide,
 And both Minervas rise in equal pride;
 Proclaiming loud, a monarch fills the throne,
 Who shines illustrious, not in wars alone.
 Let Fame look lovely in Britannia's eyes;
 They coldly court desert, who Fame despise:
 For what's ambition, but fair Virtue's sail?
 And what applause, but her propitious gale?
 When, swell'd with that, she fleets before the wind
 To glorious aims, as to the port design'd;
 When chain'd, without it, to the lab'ring oar,
 She toils! she pants! nor gains the flying shore;
 From her sublime pursuits, or turn'd aside
 By blasts of Envy, or by Fortune's tide:
 For one that has succeeded, ten are lost,
 Of equal talents, ere they make the coast.

Then let Renown to worth divine incite,
 With all her beams, but throw those beams aright.
 Then Merit droops, and Genius downward tends,
 When godlike Glory like our land descends.

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Custom the Garter long confin'd to few ;
 And gave to Birth exalted Virtue's due :
 Walpole has thrown the proud inclosure down ;
 And high desert embraces fair renown.
 Tho' rival'd, let the Peerage smiling see,
 (Smiling in justice to their own decree,)
 This proud reward of majesty bestow'd
 On worth like that, whence first the peerage flow'd.
 From frowns of Fate Britannia's blis to guard,
 Let subjects merit, and let kings reward.
Gods are most gods by giving to excell ;
And kings most like them, by rewarding well.

Though strong the twanging nerve, and, drawn
 Short is the winged arrow's upward flight ; [aright,
 But if an eagle it transfix on high,
 Lodg'd in the wound it soars into the sky.

Thus while I sing thee with unequal lays,
 And wound perhaps that worth I mean to praise ;
 Yet I transcend myself, I rise in fame,
 Not lifted by my genius, but my theme.

No more: for in this dread suspense of Fate,
 Now kingdoms fluctuate, and in dark debate
 Weigh peace and war ; now Europe's eyes are bent
 On mighty Brunswic, for the great event,
 Brunswic, of kings the terror or defence!
 Who dares detain thee at a world's expence?

END of the FIFTH VOLUME.

THE TOWN OF TROY, N.Y.